

THE
NEW ENGLISH DRAMA,
WITH

PREFATORY REMARKS,

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES, AND NOTES,

Critical and Explanatory ;

*Being the only Edition existing which is faithfully marked
with the*

STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS PERFORMED

At the Theatres Royal.

BY W. OXBERRY, COMEDIAN.

From the Last London Edition.

VOLUME NINE.

CONTAINING

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.—BUSY BODY.—

JANE SHORE.

BOSTON :

WELLS AND LILLY—COURT-STREET.

1824.

Orberry's Edition.

ALEXANDER
THE GREAT,

A TRAGEDY ;

By Nathaniel Lee.

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Remarks.

IT has been thought by an eminent critic, that taste depends upon fixed principles, and is reducible to a certain standard ; eloquently as this argument has been urged, we are far from being converts to it ; that which is the beauty of one country, is not the beauty of another, nor is there one general exciting cause of pleasurable sensations. *Habit*, and that powerful organ, the *association* of ideas, determine in most cases the tendency, as well as quantity of our feeling ; that which being seen for the first time, gives pain, will never afterwards occur as an object of beauty. We may indeed admire the rich colours of a snake, though a snake has stung us, but this arises from a long predetermined habit of considering brilliant colours as beautiful, when properly blended, a habit accompanied by so many pleasing associations, as to completely overbalance the single idea of pain. Nor is it difficult to say why brilliancy of colour is thus delightful, for it is always connected with the idea of light, and light again is associated with that of buoyant spirits, and health, and happiness. Why the breath of morning with its attendant brightness, has this power, is a point not necessary to the present question ; it is enough for our purpose, that it is so ; sickness feels more healthy, and health more freshly at the rise of a new day, and so strongly and intimately is this idea mixed up with all our feelings, that its corresponding associations are ever most delicious.

In considering taste, with reference to the dramatic difficulties redouble on all sides ; for instance, that which will appear farcical exaggeration to some, which to others is the highest flight of inspired genius, and that again will seem puerility to one sort of mind, which to another looks beautiful simplicity : where then is the one immutable standard, by which we are to measure our opinions ? Is it nature ?—If not, what is it ?—And if it be, how are we to employ it ?—All do not see nature and her various works, with the same eyes ; our modes of perception are as different as our bodies ; to one sight the tulip is most agreeable, to another the rose ; one prefers the calm of evening, another the glow of day ; and most allow that a long continued level is deformity ; yet the plain is as much the work of nature as the mountain, and consequently, if nature be the measure of appeal, both are beautiful alike. Again, we find the ear of one man is tremblingly alive to harmony, the eye of another is no less sensitive of external objects, but still they cannot feel together ; there is no common standard to which either party can refer.

We rest our argument upon these visible and obvious points, to be the more easily understood, for if we were once to come to the discussion of mental qualities, which, after all, is the proper mode of treating the question, it would be entangled in the mazes of metaphysics, and require more attention than most readers would be willing to bestow ; nor should we have gone thus far, but to meet the objections of those who have challenged us with undue severity, because our sentences have not always kept pace with their predilections. Still we think as humbly of criticism as any of our readers can, fully aware that it is neither more nor better than the servant of poesy, and sometimes a very impudent one, who throws off his livery, and,

upon the strength of a fine coat, assumes the gentleman, and would dictate to his master. In truth, poesy cannot be judged by rule ; its appeal is to the heart and to the imagination, and whatever affects them, may safely laugh to scorn the severity of the critic.—Happy that it is so !—for even sense may err, and in that error would otherwise destroy ; while ignorance and malice would crush to earth every blossom of rising genius. For ourselves, we may sin in ignorance, but never can in malice ; if our bow be feeble, at least its shafts have not been poisoned : we have combated what we thought to be wrong with fair weapons ; neither bribed by friendship to approve, nor by enmity to censure ; and if sometimes our opinions have been too warmly urged, at least we have not masked ourselves in the tyranny of dogmatism, but scrupulously given the principles of our decisions, so that the reader could never have been deceived. Many are juggled into ill-opinion of good things, by pointed sentences, and polished ridicule : they are appeals to the fancy ; but argument is a cold application to the understanding, and very rarely leads any one astray ; for it is always easier to detect the fallacies of reasoning, than of ridicule or satire.

Of “Alexander the Great,” little that is favourable can be said ; the poetry is of a very ordinary kind,—poor in its phraseology, barren in images, and measured out in one unvarying tune, that is any thing but good ; and if it were good, would be disagreeable, from its constant recurrence. That union of different feelings and different actions, which makes up character, and which occurs so abundantly in Shakspeare’s plays, is not to be found here at all ; but, perhaps, we shall be better understood by explaining effects than causes.—Shakspeare presents each of his characters in so many different points of view, he shows them in such

various lights, and under such opposite relations, that we seem to have had a long and intimate acquaintance with them, we know them to the very bottom of their hearts ; we have learnt the complexion of their most secret thoughts ; their virtues and vices, their acts and their feelings are as familiar to us as the spot of earth on which our infancy dwelt, and whose several objects seem to have grown up with us. This acquaintance with their minds and deeds, has made their forms and faces equally well known to us.—Who is not familiar with the dark eye and curling lip of *Iago*, or the melancholy, yet eloquent features of the *Prince of Denmark* ? Who does not see in his mind's eye, the gay *Mercutio*, or the broken-hearted *Lear* ? This is the great charm with Shakspeare ; his characters, whether good or bad, are all our old acquaintance, in whom we therefore must feel an interest—not so with LEE—*Alexander* and *Clytus*, and *Parisatis*, and the rest of the *Dramatis Personæ*, pass too rapidly and too indistinctly before us, more like shadows than substances ; at best they are but the acquaintance of a single half hour, tolerably agreeable, perhaps, but from the shortness of their visit, and the monotonous tone of their conversation, we know nothing of them. *Clytus* shows himself a rough soldier, and *Alexander* says he is a hero—that is all—the poet has not gone a step beyond, and when we allow them so much, his admirers have no reason to tax us with injustice.

LEE, according to his biographers, was mad ; but his madness was not the madness of inspiration ; he has done little or nothing in his tragedy of “*Alexander*,” that should give it a place on the shelf with our noble dramatists. His story forced upon him several situations, that in the hands of a poet would have been exquisitely beautiful and pathetic. The death of *Clytus*, dispelling the fumes of pride and

intoxication in *Alexander*, was a point full of capabilities ; the very vices of such a character as splendid, for they are full of energy, and his remorse might surely have been most touchingly sublime. The anguish of the tender *Statira*, cut off from life in the very minute of expected enjoyment, is no less so ; and perhaps still more the loves of *Parisotis* and *Lysimachus*. But the genius of LEE sunk beneath the burthen :—a disordered imagination is not perforce a powerful one ; on the contrary, it lays hold on one single idea, on which it dwells, to the exclusion of all others ; and so with him ; he had no power to go out of himself, to embody other characters, and just as little to cull and assimilate the beauties of nature, and apply them to the purposes of the poesy. Some worthy selections might indeed be made from his “*Alexander the Great* ;” but a few shining passages do not make a play. Perhaps the following lines of the Macedonian hero, upon the death of *Statira*, are among the best, if not in truth, the best :—

“ ————— She’s gone ! She’s gone !

All, all is hush’d !—No music now is heard ;

The roses wither ! and the fragrant breath

That wak’d their sweets, shall never wake ’em more.”

A. 5. S. 1.

NATHANIEL LEE was the son of Dr. Lee, minister of Hatfield. He received his first rudiments of learning at Westminster, from whence he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was admitted on the foundation in 1663. He commenced B. A. the same year ; but, not succeeding to a fellowship, he tried to push his fortune at court. Failing in this attempt, he tried his talents on the stage ; and, in the year 1672, made his appearance at the Duke’s

Theatre, in the character of *Duncan*, in Davenant's alteration of "Macbeth." In 1675 his first play appeared. In 1684, on the 11th of November, he was taken to Bedlam, where he continued four years. He had, however, the good fortune to recover the use of his reason, so far as to be discharged from his melancholy confinement; but he did not long survive his enlargement. Returning one night through Clare-market, overladen with wine, he fell down on the ground, as some say; according to others, on a bulk, and was killed, or stifled in the snow. He was buried in the parish church of St. Clement's Danes, aged about thirty-five years. His dramatic pieces are:

Nero, Emperor of Rome. T.—Sophonisba; or, Hannibal's Overthrow. T.—Gloriana; or, the Court of Augustus Cæsar. T.—The Rival Queens; or, the Death of Alexander the Great. T.—Mithridates, King of Pontus. T.—Theodosius; or, the Force of Love. T.—Cæsar Borgia. T.—Lucius Junius Brutus. T.—Constantine the Great. T.—The Princess of Cleve. T. C.—The Massacre of Paris. T.

Besides the above tragedies, he was concerned with Dryden in writing the "Duke of Guise," and "Œdipus."

Prologue.

WRITTEN BY SIR CARR SCROOP, BART.

How hard the Fate is of the scribbling Drudge,
Who writes to all, when yet so few can judge !
Wit, like religion, once divine was thought ;
And the dull crowd believ'd as they were taught ;
Now each fanatick fool presumes t'explain
The text, and does the sacred writ profane.
For while your wits each others fall pursue,
The fops usurp the power belongs to you.
You think y' are challeng'd in each new play-bill,
And here you come for trial of your skill ;
Where, Fencer like, you one another hurt,
While with your wounds you make the rabble sport.
Others there are that have the brutal will
To murder a poor play, but want the skill.
They love to fight, but seldom have the wit
To spy the place where they may thrust and hit ;
And therefore, like some bully of the town,
Ne'er stand to draw, but knock the poet down.
With these, like hogs in gardens, it succeeds,
They root up all, and know not flowers from weeds.
As for you, sparks, that hither come each day,
To act your own and not to mind our play ;
Rehearse your usual follies to the pit,
And with loud nonsenese drown the stage's wit ;

Talk of your clothes, your last debauches tell,
 And witty bargains to each other sell;
 Glout on the silly she, who for your sake
 Can vanity and noise for love mistake;
 Till the coquet sung in the next lampoon
 Is by her jealous friends sent out of town.
 For, in this duelling, intriguing age,
 The love you make is like the war you wage:
 Y're still prevented e'er you come t'engage.
 But 'tis not to such trifling foes as you,
 The mighty Alexander deigns to sue;
 Ye Persians of the pit he does despise,
 But to the men of sense for aid he flies;
 On their experienc'd arms he now depends,
 Nor fears he odds, if they but prove his friends.
 For as he once a little handful chose,
 The numerous armies of the world t'oppose,
 So back'd by you, who understood the rules,
 He hopes to rout the mighty host of fools.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is about two hours and forty-eight minutes. The first act occupies the space of thirty minutes—the second, thirty—the third, twenty-eight—the fourth, thirty-five—the fifth, forty-five.—Half-price commences, generally, at a quarter before nine o'clock.

Costume.

ALEXANDER.

Scarlet velvet robe ; buff and scarlet vest ; buff lambroquéens ; flesh legs and arms ; the dress elegantly embroidered and studded with steel ornaments ; helmet, with laurels.

CLYTUS.

Russet sandals ; flesh legs and arms ; vest and lambroquéens.

CASSANDER.

Ibid.

LYSIMACHUS.

Ibid.

HEPHESTION.

Ibid.

POLYPERCHON.

Ibid.

THESSALUS.

Ibid.

PERDICCAS.

Ibid.

EUMENES.

Ibid.

ARISTANDER.

Ibid.

ROXANA.

White cloth dress and robe, richly trimmed with gold.

STATIRA.

White satin dress, with silver border ; leno robe, spangled with silver.

PARISAIS.

Spangled dress, blue velvet robe ; spangled border.

SYSIGAMBIS.

White satin dress, trimmed with silver ; spangled leno upper short dress ; orange velvet robe, trimmed with silver.

Ladies and Chorus, in white dresses.

Persons Represented.

	<i>Drury-lane.</i>	<i>Covent-garden.</i>
<i>Alexander</i>	Mr. Kean.	Mr C. Kemble.
<i>Clytus</i>	Mr. Pope.	Mr. Egerton.
<i>Cassander</i>	Mr. Bengough.	Mr. Barrymore.
<i>Lysimachus</i>	Mr. Wallack.	Mr. Abbott.
<i>Hephestion</i>	Mr. Barnard.	Mr. Connor.
<i>Polyperchon</i>	Mr R. Phillips.	Mr. Claremont.
<i>Thessalus</i>	Mr Coveney.	Mr. Chapman.
<i>Perdiccas</i>	Mr Kent.	Mr. J. Matthews.
<i>Eumenes</i>	Mr. Cooke.	Mr King.
<i>Aristander</i>	Mr. Miller.	Mr. Jefferies.
<i>Slave</i>	Mr. Ebsworth.	Mr. Norris.
<i>Roxana</i>	Mrs. Bartley.	Mrs Egerton.
<i>Statira</i>	Mrs. Robinson.	Mrs. Faucit.
<i>Parisatis</i>	Miss Ivers.	Mrs. Capell.
<i>Sysigambis</i>	Mrs. Brereton.	Miss Logan.

Stage Directions.

By R.H.	- - - - -	is meant	- - - - -	Right Hand.
L.H.	- - - - -		- - - - -	Left Hand.
S.E.	- - - - -		- - - - -	Second Entrance,
U.E.	- - - - -		- - - - -	Upper Entrance.
M.D.	- - - - -		- - - - -	Middle Door.
D.F.	- - - - -		- - - - -	Door in Flat.
R.H.D.	- - - - -		- - - - -	Right Hand Door,
L.H.D.	- - - - -		- - - - -	Left Hand Door,

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Alexander's Camp before Babylon.*

*Enter HEPHESTION and LYSIMACHUS, fighting,
L.H.U.E.—CLYTUS parting them.*

Cly. What, are you madmen? This a time for quarrel?

Put up, I say, or by the gods that form'd me,
He who refuses, makes a foe of Clytus.

Lys. I have his sword.

Cly. But must not have his life.

Lys. Must not, old Clytus!

Cly. Hair-brain'd boy, you must not. [war,

Heph. Lend me thy sword, thou father of the
Thou far-fam'd guard of Alexander's life.

Curse on this weak, unexecuting arm!

Lend it, old Clytus, to redeem my fame;

Lysimachus is brave, and else will scorn me.

Lys. There, take thy sword, and since thou'rt
bent on death,

Know, 'tis thy glory that thou dy'st by me.

Cly. Stay thee, Lysimachus ; Hephestion, hold ;
 I bar you both ; my body interpos'd ;
 Now let me see which of you dares to strike.
 By Jove, you've stirr'd the old man !—that rash
 arm

That first advances moves against the gods,
 And our great king, whose deputy I stand.

Lys. Some prop'rer time must terminate our
 quarrel.

Heph. And cure the bleeding wounds my
 honour bears. [is proper ;

Cly. Some prop'rer time ! 'tis false—no hour
 No time should see a brave man do amiss
 Say, what's the noble cause of all this madness ?
 What vast ambition blows the dangerous fire ?
 Why a vain, smiling, whining, coz'ning woman.
 By all my triumphs ! in the heat of youth, [lay,
 When towns were sack'd, and beauties prostrate
 When my blood boil'd, and nature work'd me
 high,

Clytus ne'er bow'd his body to such shame ;
 I knew 'em, and despis'd their cobweb arts :
 The whole sex is not worth a soldier's thought.

Lys. Our cause of quarrel may to thee seem
 light ;

But know, a less has set the world in arms.

Cly. Yes, Troy, they tell us, by a woman fell :
 Curse on the sex, they are the bane of virtue !
 Death ! I'd rather this right arm were lost,
 Than that the king should hear of your
 imprudence—

What ! on a day thus set apart for triumph !

Lys. We were, indeed, to blame.

Cly. This memorable day!

When our hot master, whose impatient soul
 Outrides the sun, and sighs for other worlds
 To spread his conquests, and diffuse his glory;
 Now bids the trumpet for awhile be silent,
 And plays with monarchs, whom he used to
 drive;

Shall we, by broils, awake him into rage,
 And rouse the lion, that has ceas'd to roar?

Lys. Clytus, thou'rt right—put up thy sword,
 Hephestion:

Had passion not eclips'd the light of reason,
 Untold, we might this consequence have seen.

Heph. Why has not reason power to conquer
 Why are we thus enslav'd? [love?

Cly. Because unmann'd;

Because ye follow Alexander's steps.

Heav'ns! that a face should thus bewitch his soul,
 And ruin all that's great and godlike in it.

Talk be my bane, yet the old man must talk;

Not so he lov'd, when he at Issus fought,

And join'd in mighty combat with Darius,

Whom, from his chariot, flaming all with gems,

He hurl'd to earth, and catch'd th' imperial crown.

'Twas not the shaft of love perform'd that feat;

He knew no cupids then. Now mark the change

A brace of rival queens embroil the court;

And, while each hand is thus employ'd in beauty,

Where has he room for glory?

Heph. In his heart.

[forgot

Cly. Well said, young minion!—I, indeed,
 To whom I spoke—but Sysigambis comes:

Now is your time, for with her comes an idol
That claims your homage—I'll attend the king.
[Exit Clytus, R.H.]

Enter SYSIGAMBIS, *with a letter*, and PARISATIS, L.H.

Sys. Why will you wound me with your fond
complaints,
And urge a suit that I can never grant?
You know, my child, 'tis Alexander's will;
He demands you for his lov'd Hephestion.
To disobey him might inflame his wrath,
And plunge our house in ruins yet unknown.

Par. To soothe this god, and charm him into
temper,
Is there no victim; none but Parisatis?
Must I be doom'd to wretchedness and woe,
That others may enjoy the conqueror's smiles;
Oh! if you ever lov'd my royal father—
And sure you did, your gushing tears proclaim it—
If still his name be dear, have pity on me!
He would not thus have forc'd me to despair;
Indeed he would not.—Had I begg'd him thus,
He would have heard me, e'er my heart was
broke.

Sys. When will my suff'rings end! O when,
ye gods!
For sixty rolling years, my soul has stood
The dread vicissitudes of fate unmov'd:
I thought 'em your decrees, and therefore
yielded.
But this last trial, as it springs from folly,
Exceeds my suff'rance, and I must complain.

Lys. (*Lys. advances L.H. Heph. R.H.*) When
 Sysigambis mourns, no common woe
 Can be the cause—'tis misery, indeed.
 Yet, pardon, mighty queen, a wretched prince,
 Who thus presumes to plead the cause of love :
 Beyond my life, beyond the world, (*kneeling*)
 I prize

Fair Parisatis—Hear me, I conjure you !
 As you have authoriz'd Hephestion's vows,
 Reject not mine ; grant me but equal leave
 To serve the princess, and let love decide.

Heph. A blessing like the beauteous Parisatis
 Whole years of service, and the world's wide
 empire,

With all the blood that circles in our veins,
 Can never merit ; therefore, in my favour,
 I beg'd the king to interpose his int'rest ;
 Therefore, I beg'd your majesty's assistance ;
 Your word is pass'd, and all my hopes rest on't.

Lys. (*Rising.*) Perish such hopes ! for love's
 a gen'rous passion,
 Which seeks the happiness of her we love,
 Beyond th' enjoyment of our own desires ;
 Nor kings, nor parents here have ought to do.
 Love owns no influence, and disdains controul ;
 Let 'em stand neuter—'tis all I ask.

Heph. Such arrogance, did Alexander woo,
 Would lose him all the conquests he has won.

Lys. To talk of conquests well becomes the man
 Whose life and sword are but his rival's gift.

Sys. It grieves me brave Lysimachus, to find
 My power fall short of my desires to serve you ;
 You know Hephestion first declar'd his love,

And 'tis as true, I promis'd him my aid.
 Your glorious king, his mighty advocate,
 Became himself an humble suppliant for him.
 Forget her, prince, and triumph o'er your passion :
 A conquest worthy of a soul like thine.

Lys. Forget her, madam ! sooner shall the sun
 Forget to shine, and tumble from his sphere.
 Farewell, great queen—my honour now demands
 That Alexander should himself explain
 That wond'rous merit which exalts his fav'rite,
 And casts Lysimachus at such a distance.

[*Exit Lysimachus, L.H.*

Sys. In this wild transport of ungovern'd
 passion
 Too far, I fear, he will incense the king.
 Is Alexander yet, my lord, arriv'd ?

Heph. Madam, I know not, but Cassander
 comes,
 He may, perhaps, inform us.

Sys. I would shun him. [me :
 Something there is, I know not why, that shocks
 Something my nature shrinks at, when I see him.

[*Exeunt, R.H.*

Enter CASSANDER, L.H.

Cas. The face of day now blushes scarlet deep :
 Now blackens into night. The low'ring sun,
 As if the dreadful business he foreknew,
 Drives heavily his sable chariot on.
 All nature seems alarm'd for Alexander.—
 Why, be it so. Her pangs proclaim my triumph.

A mad Chaldean, with a flaming torch
Came to my bed last night, and bellowing o'er me,
Well had it been, for Babylon, he cried,
If curst Cassander never had been born.

Enter THESSALUS, R.H. with a packet.

How now, dear Thessalus, what packet's that ?

Thes. From Macedon, a trusty slave just brought it.

Your father chides us for our cold delay ;
He says, Craterus, by the king's appointment,
Comes, in his room, to govern Macedon,
Which nothing but the tyrant's death can hinder :
Therefore he bids us boldly strike at once,
Or quit our purpose, and confess our fears.

Cas. Is not his fate resolved ?—this night he dies ;

And thus my father but forestalls my purpose.
How am I slow then ?—if I rode on thunder,
Wing'd as the light'ning, it would ask some moments,

Ere I could blast the growth of this Colossus.

Thes. Mark where the haughty Polyperchon comes !

Some new affront by Alexander given,
Swells in his heart, and stings him into madness.

Cas. Now, now's our time ; he must, he shall be ours :

His haughty soul will kindle at his wrongs,
Blaze into rage, and glory in revenge.

Enter POLYPERCHON, L.H.

Poly. Still as I pass, fresh murmurs fill my ears ;

All talk of wrongs, and mutter their complaints.
Poor soul-less reptiles!—their revenge expires
In idle threats—the fortitude of cowards!

Their province is to talk ! 'tis mine to act, [me,
And show this tyrant, when he dar'd to wrong
He wrong'd a man whose attribute is vengeance.

Cas. All nations bow their heads with servile
homage,

And kiss the feet of this exalted man.

The name, the shout, the blast from ev'ry mouth
Is Alexander ! Alexander stuns

The list'ning ear, and drowns the voice of
heav'n. [spaniels ;

The earth's commanders fawn like crouching
And if this hunter of the barbarous world,

But wind himself a god, all echo him,
With universal cry.

Poly. I fawn, or echo him !

Cassander, no ! my soul disdains the thought !

Let eastern slaves, or prostituted Greeks

Crouch at his feet, or tremble if he frown.

When Polyperchon can descend so low,

False to that honour, which thro' fields of death,
I still have courted, where the fight was fiercest,
Be scorn my portion ; infamy my lot.

Thes. The king may doom me to a thousand
tortures,

Ply me with fire. and rack me like Philotas,
Ere I shall stoop to idolize his pride.

Cas. Not Aristander, had he rais'd all hell,
Cou'd more have shock'd my soul, than thou hast
done,

By the bare mention of Philotas' murder.

O Polyperchon ! how shall I describe it !

Did not your eyes rain blood to see the hero ?

Did not your spirits burst with smother'd ven-
geance,

To see thy noble fellow-warrior tortur'd ?

Yet, without groaning, or a tear, endure [it !

The torments of the damn'd ? O death to think

We saw him bruis'd ; we saw his bones laid
bare ; [flesh

His veins wide lanc'd, and the poor quiv'ring

With fiery pincers from his bosom torn ; [ing.

Till all beheld where the great heart lay pant-

Poly. Yet all like statues stood !—cold, life-
less statues !

As if the sight had froze us into marble : [flown

When, with collected rage, we should have

To instant vengeance on the ruthless cause,

And plung'd a thousand daggers in his heart.

Cas. At our last banquet, when the bowl had
gone

The giddy round, and wine inflam'd my spirits ;

I saw Craterus and Hephestion enter

In Persian robes ; to Alexander's health

They largely drank ; and falling at his feet

With impious adoration thus address'd

Their idol god. Hail, son of thund'ring Jove !

Hail, first of kings ! young Ammon live for ever !

Then kiss'd the ground ; on which I laugh'd
aloud,

And scoffing, ask'd 'em, why they kiss'd no
harder :

Whereon the tyrant, starting from his throne,
Spurn'd me to earth, and stamping on my neck,
Learn thou to kiss it, was his fierce reply ;
While, with his foot, he press'd me to the earth,
Till I lay welt'ring in a foam of blood.

Poly. Thus when I mock'd the Persians that
ador'd him,

He struck me on the face, swung me around,
And bid his guards chastize me like a slave.
But if he 'scape my vengeance, may he live,
Great as that God whose name he thus profanes,
And, like a slave, may I again be beaten,
Scoff'd as I pass, and branded for a coward.

Cas. There spoke the spirit of Calisthenes :
Remember, he's a man, his flesh as penetrable
As any girl's, and wounded too as soon ;
To give him death no thunders are requir'd.
Struck by a stone, young Jupiter has fall'n,
A sword has pierc'd him, and the blood has fol-
lowed ;

Nay, we have seen an hundred common^dailments
Bring this immortal to the gates of death.

Poly. O let us not delay the glorious business !
Our wrongs are great, and honour calls for ven-
geance.

Cas. This day exulting Babylon receives
The mighty robber—with him comes Roxana,
Fierce, haughty fair ! On his return from India,
Artful she met him in the height of triumph,
And by a thousand wiles at Susa kept him,
In all the luxury of eastern revels.

Poly. How bore Statira his revolted love ?

For, if I err not, e'er the king espous'd her,
She made him promise to renounce Roxana.

Thes. No words can paint the anguish it occasion'd ;

E'en Sysigambis wept, while the wrong'd queen
Struck to the heart, fell lifeless on the ground.

Cas. When the first tumult of her grief was
laid,

I sought to fire her into wild revenge ;
And to that end, with all the art I could,
Describ'd his passion for the bright Roxana :
But tho' I could not to my wish inflame her,
Thus far, at least, her jealousy will help ; [him,
She'll give him troubles that perhaps may end
And set the court in universal uproar.

But see she comes. Our plots begin to ripen.
Now every one disperse,
And, with a face of friendship, meet the king.

[*Exeunt Cas. R.H. Poly. and Thes. L.H.U.E.*

Enter SYSIGAMBIS, STATIRA, and PARISATIS, L.H.

Sta. O for a dagger, a draught of poison,
flames ! [thing.
Swell heart, break, break thou wretched stubborn
Now, by the sacred fire, I'll not be held :
Pray give me leave to walk.

Sys. Is there no reverence to my person due ?
'Trust me, Statira, had thy father liv'd,
Darius would have heard me.

Sta. O, he's false
This glorious man, this wonder of the world,
Is to his love, and every god foresworn.

O I have heard him breathe such ardent vows,
Out-weep the morning with his dewy eyes,
And sigh and swear the list'ning stars away.

Sys. Believe not rumour, 'tis impossible.
Thy Alexander is renown'd for truth;
Above deceit—

Sta. Away, and let me die.
Why, Alexander, why would'st thou deceive me!
Have I not kiss'd thy wounds with dying fond-
ness, [hair!
Bath'd 'em in tears, and bound 'em with my
Par. If man can thus renounce the solemn
ties

Of sacred love, who wou'd regard his vows ?

Sta. Regard his vows, the monster, traitor!
Oh!

I will forsake the haunts of men, converse
No more with aught that's human ; dwell with
darkness ;

For since the sight of him is now unwelcome,
What has the world to give Statira joy?

Yet I must tell thee, perjur'd as he is,
Not the soft breezes of the genial spring,
The fragrant violet, or op'ning rose,
Are half so sweet as Alexander's breath:

Then he will talk—good gods how he will talk !
He speaks the kindest words, and looks such
things, [grace,

Vows with such passion, and swears with such a
That it is heav'n to be deluded by him.

(Crosses to R.H.)

Sys. Her sorrows must have way.

Sta. Roxana then enjoys my perjur'd love ;
 Roxana clasps my monarch in her arms,
 Doats on my conqu'ror, my dear lord, my king.
 Oh 'tis too much ! by heav'n I cannot bear it !
 I'll die, or rid me of the burning torture.
 Hear me, bright god of day, hear ev'ry god.

Sys. Take heed, Statira ; weigh it well, my
 child,
 Ere desperate love enforces you to swear.

Sta. O fear not that, already have I weigh'd it ;
 And in the presence here of heav'n and you,
 Renounce all converse with perfidious man.
 Farewell ye cozeners of our easy sex !
 And thou the falsest of the faithless kind,
 Farewell for ever ! Oh, farewell ! farewell !
 If I but mention him the tears will flow. [mine,
 How could'st thou, cruel, wrong a heart like
 'Thus fond, thus doting, ev'n to madness, on
 thee ! [comes,

Sys. Clear up thy griefs, thy Alexander
 Triumphant in the spoils of conquer'd India ;
 This day the hero enters Babylon.

Sta. Why let him come : all eyes will gaze
 with rapture.
 All hearts will joy to see the victor pass,
 All but the wretched the forlorn Statira.

(*Crosse to centre.*)

Sys. Wilt thou not see him then ? [vow,

Sta. I swear, and heav'n be witness to my
 (Kneels.)

Never from this sad hour, never to see,
 Nor speak, no, nor, if possible, to think
 Of Alexander more : this is my vow,
 And when I break it—

Sys. Do not ruin all !

Sta. May I again be perjured and deluded !
May furies rend my heart ! may lightnings blast
me ! [tion.

Sys. Recal, my child, the dreadful impreca-

Sta. No, I will publish it through all the court ;
Then to the bow'rs of great Semiramis,
Retire for ever from the treacherous world.
There from man's sight will I conceal my woes,
And seek in solitude a calm repose : [troul,
Nor pray'rs nor tears, shall my resolves con-
Nor love itself, that tyrant of the soul.

[*Exeunt*, L.H.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A triumphal Arch at the Entrance
into Babylon.*

*Enter ALEXANDER in a Triumphal Car ; Trophies
and warlike Ensigns in procession before him ;
CLYTUS, HEPIHESTION, LYSIMACHUS, CASSANDER,
POLYPERCHON, THESSALUS, EUMENES, Chorus of
Priests, Youths and Virgins, Guards, and Atten-
dants.*

*See the conq'ring hero comes,
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums ;*

*Sports prepare, the laurel bring,
Songs of triumph to him sing.*

*See the godlike youth advance ;
Breath the flute, and lead the dance ;
Myrtles wreath, and roses twine,
To deck the hero's brow divine.*

Heph. Hail, son of Jove ! great Alexander,
hail ! [friend !

Alex. Rise all ; and thou, my second self, my
Oh my Hephestion ! raise thee from the earth !
Come to my arms, and hide thee in my heart ;
Nearer, yet nearer, else thou lov'st me not.

Heph. Not love my king ! bear witness all ye
powers,

And let your thunder nail me to the centre,
If sacred friendship ever burn'd more brightly !
Immortal bosoms can alone admit
A flame more pure, more permanent than mine.

Alex. Thou dearer to me than my groves of
laurel !

I know thou lov'st thy Alexander more,
Than Clytus does the king.

Lys. Now for my fate !

I see that death awaits me—yet I'll on.

Dread sir, I cast me at your royal feet. [mine

Alex. Rise, my Lysimachus ; thy veins and
From the same fountain have deriv'd their
streams.

Rise to my arms, and let thy king embrace thee.
Is not that Clytus ?

Cly. Your old faithful soldier.

Alex. Clytus, thy hand;—thy hand, Lysimachus ;

Thus double-arm'd, methinks,
I stand tremendous as the Lybian god,
Who, while his priests and I quaff'd sacred blood,
Acknowledg'd me his son ; my lightning thou,
And thou, my mighty thunder. I have seen
Thy glitt'ring sword out-fly celestial fire ;
And, when I've cry'd, begone, and execute,
I've seen him run swifter than starting hinds,
Nor bent the tender grass beneath his feet.

Lys. When fame invites, and Alexander leads,
Dangers and toils but animate the brave.

Cly. Perish the soldier, inglorious and despis'd,
Who starts from either, when the king cries—on !

Alex. Oh, Clytus ! Oh, my noble veteran !
'Twas, I remember, when I pass'd the Granicus,
Thy arm preserv'd me from unequal force ;
When fierce Itanor and the bold Rhesaces,
Fell both upon me with two mighty blows,
And clove my temper'd helmet quite asunder ;
Then, like a god, flew Clytus to my aid ;
Thy thunder struck Rhesaces to the ground,
And turn'd with ready vengeance, on Itanor.

Cly. To your own deeds that victory you owe,
And sure your arms did never boast a nobler.

Alex. By heav'n, they never did : they never
can :

And I am prouder to have pass'd that stream,
Than to have driven a million o'er the plain :
Can none remember?—Yes, I know all must—
When glory, like the dazzling eagle stood
Perch'd on my beaver in the Granic flood ;

When fortune's self my standard trembling bore,
And the pale fates stood frightened on the shore ;
When each immortal on the billows rode,
And I myself appear'd the leading god.

Enter ARISTANDER, L.H.

Aris. Haste, first of hero's, from this fatal
place ;
Far, far from Babylon, enjoy your triumph,
Or all the glories, which your youth has won,
Are blasted in their spring.

Alex. What mean thy fears ?
And why that wild distraction on thy brow ?

Aris. This morn, great king, I view'd the
angry sky,
And, frightened at the direful prodigies,
'To Orosmales for instruction flew ;
But, as I pray'd, deep-echoing groans I heard,
And shrieks, as of the damn'd that howl for sin.
Shock'd at the omen, while amaz'd I lay
In prostrate rev'rence on the trembling floor,
Thus spoke the god :
The brightest glory of imperial man,
The pride of nations, and the boast of fame,
Remorseless fate, in Babylon, has doom'd
To sudden and irrevocable ruin.

Alex. If heav'n ordains that Babylon must fall,
Can I prevent the immutable decree ?

Enter PERDICCAS, L.H.

Per. Oh, horror ! horror ! Dreadful and portentous !

Alex. How now, Perdiccas! Whence this exclamation?

Per. As Meleager and myself, this morn,
Led forth the Persian horse to exercise,
We heard a noise as of a rushing wind;
When suddenly a flight of baleful birds,
Like a thick cloud, obscur'd the face of heav'n;
On sounding wings from diff'rent parts they flew,
Encount'ring met, and battled in the air;
Their talons clash'd, their beaks gave mighty
blows, [wounds.

And show'rs of blood fell copious from their

Alex. Though all the curtains of the sky were drawn,

And the stars wink, young Ammon shall go on;
While my Statira shines, I cannot stray,
Love lifts his torch to light me on my way,
And her bright eyes create another day.

Lys. Vouchsafe, dread sir, to hear my humble
suit, [man.

A prince intreats it, and what's more, your kins-

Alex. A soldier asks it; that's the noblest claim.

Lys. For all the services my sword has done,
Humbly I beg the princess Parisatis.

Alex. Lysimachus, no more—it is not well—
My word, you know, is to Hephestion given:
How dare you then—but let me hear no more
on't. [wall.

Lys. At your command, to scale th' embattled
Or fetch the gore-dy'd standard from the foe,
When has Hephestion flown with warmer zeal?
When did he leave Lysimachus behind?
These I have done, for these were in my pow'r;

But when you charge me to renounce my love,
And from my thoughts to banish Parisatis,
Obedience there becomes impossible ;
Nature revolts, and my whole soul rebels.

Alex. It does, brave sir!—now hear me, and
be dumb !

When, by my order, curst Calisthenes
Was as a traitor, doom'd to live in torments—
Your pity sped him in despite of me.
Think not I have forgot your insolence ;
No ; though I pardon'd it :—yet, if again
Thou dar'st to cross me with another crime,
The bolts of fury shall be doubled on thee.—
In the mean time—think not of Parisatis ;
For if thou dost—by the immortal Ammon !
I'll not regard that blood of mine thou shar'st,
But use thee as the vilest Macedonian.

Lys. I knew you partial, ere I mov'd my suit ;
Yet, know, it shakes not my determin'd purpose ;
While I have life and strength to wield a sword,
I never will forego the glorious claim.

Alex. Against my life !—ha ! traitor, was it so ?
'Tis said, that I am rash, of hasty humour ;
But I appeal to the immortal gods,
If ever petty, poor, provincial lord
Had temper like to mine ? My slave, whom I
Could tread to clay, dares utter bloody threats.

Cly. Forgive dread sir, the frantic warmth of
love :

The noble prince, I read it in his eyes,
Wou'd die a thousand deaths to serve his king,
And justify his loyalty and truth. [arm,

Lys. I meant his minion there should feel my

Love claims his blood, nor shall he live to triumph

In that destruction that awaits his rival.

Alex. I pardon thee, for my old Clytus' sake ;
But if once more thou mention thy rash love,
Or dar'st attempt Hephestion's precious life,
I'll pour such storms of indignation on thee,
Philota's rack, Calisthenes' disgrace,
Shall be delights, to what thou shalt endure.

Cly. My lord, the aged queen, with Parisatis,
Come to congratulate your safe arrival.

Enter SYSIGAMBIS, and PARISATIS, L.H.

Alex. Oh, thou, the best of women, Sysigambis,
Source of my joy, blest parent of my love !

Sys. In humble duty to the gods and you,
Permit us, sir, with gratitude to bow.
Through you the royal house of Persia shines,
Rais'd from the depth of wretchedness and ruin,
In all the splendour of imperial greatness.

Alex. To meet me thus, was generously done ;
But still there wants, to crown my happiness,
That treasure of my soul, my dear Statira :
Had she but come to meet her Alexander,
I had been blest indeed.

Cly. Now who shall dare
To tell him of the queen's vow ?

Alex. How fares
My love ?—Ha ! neither answer me ! all silent !
A sudden horror, like a bolt of ice,
Shoots to my heart, and numbs the seat of life.

Heph. I would relate it, but my courage fails me. [here ?]

Alex. Why stand you all as you were rooted
What, will none answer ? my Hephestion silent ?
If thou hast any love for Alexander ;
If ever I obliged thee by my care ;
When through the field of death my eye has
watch'd thee,

Resolve my doubts, and rescue me from madness.

Heph. Your mourning queen has no disease
but grief,
Occasioned by the jealous pangs of love.
She heard, dread sir, (for what can 'scape a
lover)

That you, regardless of your vows, at Susa,
Had to Roxana's charms resign'd your heart,
And revell'd in the joys you once forswore.

Alex. I own, the subtle sorceress, in my riot,
My reason gone, seduc'd me to her bed ;
But, when I wak'd, I shook the Circe off ;
Nor griev'd I less for that which I had done,
Than when at Thais' suit, enrag'd with wine,
I set the fam'd Persepolis on fire.

Heph. Your queen Statira, in the rage of grief,
And agony of desp'rate love, has sworn,
Never to see your majesty again.

Alex. Oh, madam, has she, has Statira sworn
Never to see her Alexander more ? [vow ;

Par. With sorrow, sir, I heard the solemn
My mother heard it, and in vain adjur'd her,
By every tender motive, to recall it. [wrongs,

Sys. But with that fierceness she resents her
Dwells on your fault, and heightens the offence,

That I could wish your majesty forget her.

Alex. Ha, could you wish me to forget Statira ?
The star which brightens Alexander's life,
His guide by day, and goddess of his nights !
I feel her now ; she beats in every pulse,
Throbs at my heart, and circles with my blood.

Sys. Have patience, sir, and trust to heav'n
and me ;

If my authority has any influence,
I will exert it, and she shall be yours.

Alex. Haste, madam, haste, if you would have
me live ;

Fly, ere, for ever, she abjure the world,
And stop the sad procession. [*Exit Sysigambis*, L.H.
Parisatis,

Hang thou about her ; wash her feet with tears,
Nay, haste ; the breath of gods and eloquence,
Of angels, go along with you. [*Exit Parisatis*, L.H.
Oh, my heart ! [pangs

Lys. Now let your majesty, who feels the
Of disappointed love, reflect on mine.

Alex. Ha ! [plead ?

Cly. What, are you mad ? Is this a time to

Lys. The prop'rest time ; he dares not now
be partial,

Lest heav'n, in justice, should avenge my wrongs,
And double ev'ry pang which he feels now.

Alex. Why dost thou tempt me thus to thy
undoing ? [so :

Death thou shouldst have, were it not courted
But, know, to thy confusion, that my word,
Like destiny, admits of no repeal : [nuptials
Therefore, in chains, shalt thou behold the

Of my Hephestion. Guards, take him prisoner.
(*The Guards seize Lysimachus.*)

Lys. Away, ye slaves, I'll not resign my sword,
'Till first I've drench'd it in my rival's blood.

Alex. I charge you kill him not; take him
alive:

The dignity of kings is now concern'd,
And I will find a way to tame this rebel.

Cly. Kneel—for I see rage lightning in his
eyes.

Lys. I neither hope, nor will I sue for pardon;
Had I my sword and liberty again,
Again I would attempt his favourite's heart.

Alex. Hence, from my sight, and bear him to
a dungeon.

Perdiccas, give this lion to a lion.—

None speak for him; fly; stop his mouth, away.

[*Exeunt Lysimachus, Perdiccas, and Guards, L.H.*]

Cly. This comes of women—the result of love.
Yet were I heated now with wine, I doubt
I should be preaching in this fool's behalf.

Alex. Come hither, Clytus, and my friend
Hephestion;

Lend me your arms; for I am sick o' the sudden.
I fear, betwixt Statira's cruel vows,
And fond Roxana's arts, your king will fall.

Cly. Better the race of women were destroyed,
And Persia sunk in everlasting ruin.

Heph. Look up, my lord, and bend not thus
your head,
As if you purpos'd to forsake the world,
Which you have greatly won.

Alex. Wou'd I had not ;
 There's no true joy in such unwieldy fortune.
 Eternal gazers lasting troubles make ;
 All find my spots, but few observe my brightness.
 Stand from about me all, and give me air !

(They retire.)

Yes, I will shake this Cupid from my soul ;
 I'll fright the feeble god with wars alarms,
 Or drown his pow'r in floods of hostile blood.
 Grant me, great Mars, once more in arms to
 shine, [line ;
 And break, like light'ning, through the embattl'd
 O'er fields of death to whirl the rapid car,
 And blaze amidst the thunder of the war,
 Resistless as the bolt that rends the grove ;—
 Or greatly perish, like the son of Jove.

[Exeunt, R.H.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Square before the Palace.*

Trumpets sounding a dead march. **LYSIMACHUS**
led Prisoner, PARISATIS, EUMENES, PERDICCAS,
and Guards, R.H.

Par. Stay, my Lysimachus ! a moment stay !
 Oh, whither art thou going ?—hold a moment !

Unkind! thou know'st my life was wrapt in thine,
Why would'st thou then to worse than death expose me?

Lys. Oh, may'st thou live in joys without allay!
Grant it, ye gods! a better fortune waits thee;
Live and enjoy it—'tis my dying wish;
While to the grave the lost Lysimachus
Alone retires, and bids the world adieu.

Par. Even in that grave will Parisatis join thee;

Yes, cruel man! not death itself shall part us;
A mother's pow'r, a sister's soft'ning tears,
With all the fury of a tyrant's frown,
Shall not compel me to outlive thy loss.

Lys. Were I to live till nature's self decay'd,
This wond'rous waste of unexampled love
I never could repay—Oh, Parisatis!
Thy charms might fire a coward into courage;
How must they act, then, on a soul like mine?
Defenceless, and unarm'd, I fight for thee,
And may, perhaps, compel th' astonish'd world,
And force the king to own that I deserve thee.
Eumenes, take the princess to thy charge:
Away, Perdiccas, all my soul's on fire.

[*Exeunt, Parisatis and Perdiccas, R.H. Lysimachus and Guards, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*A Pavillion.*

Enter ROXANA and CASSANDER, R.H.

Rox. Deserted! saidst thou? for a girl abandon'd!

A puny girl, made up of wat'ry elements!
 Shall she embrace the god of my desires,
 And triumph in the heart Roxana claims?
 If I forget it, may'st thou, Jove, deprive me
 Of vengeance, make me the most wretched
 thing [lowest
 On earth, while living. and when dead, the
 And blackest of the fiends!

Cas. Oh, nobly said!

Just is the vengeance which inflames your soul;
 Your wrongs demand it—but let reason govern;
 This wild rage, else, may disappoint your aims.

Rox. Away, away, and give a whirlwind room;
 Pride, indignation, fury, and contempt,
 War in my breast, and torture me to madness!

Cas. Oh, think not I would check your boldest
 flights;

No—I approve 'em, and will aid your vengeance.
 But, princess, let us choose the safest course,
 Or we may give our foes new cause of triumph,
 Should they discover, and prevent our purpose.

Rox. Fear not, Cassander, nothing shall pre-
 vent it;

Roxana dooms him, and her voice is fate.
 My soul, from childhood, has aspir'd to empire;
 In early non-age I was us'd to reign
 Among my she-companions: I despis'd
 The trifling arts, and little wiles of women,
 And taught 'em, with an Amazonian spirit,
 To wind the steed, to chase the foaming boar,
 And conquer man, the lawless, charter'd savage.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Cas. Her words, her looks, her every motion
fires me !

Rox. But when I heard of Alexander's fame,
How, with a handful, he had vanquish'd millions,
Spoil'd all the East, and captive held our queens ;
While, like a god, unconquer'd by their charms,
With heav'nly pity he assuag'd their woes,
Dry'd up their tears, and sooth'd them into
peace

I hung attentive on my father's lips,
And wish'd him tell the wond'rous tale again.
No longer pleasing were my former sports ;
Love had its turn, and all the woman reign'd.
Involuntary sighs heav'd in my breast,
And glowing blushes crimson'd on my cheek ;
E'en in my slumbers I have often mourn'd
In plaintive sounds, and murmur'd Alexander.

Cas. Curse on his name !—she doats upon him
still.

Rox. At length this conqueror to Zogdia came,
And, cover'd o'er with laurels, storm'd the city :
But, Oh, Cassander ! where shall I find words
To paint the extatic transports of my soul !
When, midst a circle of unrivall'd beauties,
I saw myself distinguish'd by the hero !
With artless rapture I receiv'd his vows,
The warmest, sure, that ever lover breath'd,
Of fervent love, and everlasting truth.

Cas. And need you then be told, those times
are past ?

Statira now engrosses all his thoughts :
The Persian queen, without a rival, reigns
Sole mistress of his heart—nor can thy charms,

The brightest, sure, that ever woman boasted,
 Nor all his vows of everlasting love,
 Secure Roxana from disdain and insult.

Rox. Oh, thou hast rous'd the lion in my soul !
 Ha ! shall the daughter of Darius hold him ?
 No, 'tis resolv'd ; I will resume my sphere,
 Or, falling, spread a general ruin round me,
 Roxana and Statira ; they are names
 That must for ever jar, like clashing clouds,
 When they encounter, thunders must ensue.

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Cas. Behold, she comes, in all the pomp of
 sorrow,
 Determin'd to fulfil her solemn vow !

(*They retire.*)

Rox. Away, and let us mark th' important
 scene.

Enter STATIRA and SYSIGAMBIS, R.H.

Sys. Oh, my Statira, how has passion chang'd
 thee !

Think, in the rage of disappointed love,
 If treated thus, and hurried to extremes,
 What Alexander may denounce against us ;
 Against the poor remains of lost Darius.

Sta. Oh, fear not that ! I know he will be
 kind,

For my sake kind, to you and Parisatis :
 Tell him, I rail'd not at his falsehood to me,
 But with my parting breath spoke kindly of him ;
 Tell him I wept at our divided loves,
 And, sighing, sent a last forgiveness to him.

Sys. No, I can ne'er again presume to meet him,

Never approach the much-wrong'd Alexander,
If thou refuse to see him——Oh, Statira !

Thy aged mother, and thy weeping country,
Claim thy regard, and challenge thy compassion :
Hear us, my child, and lift us from despair.

Sta. Thus low, I cast me at your royal feet,
To bathe them with my tears ; or, if you please,
I'll let out life, and wash 'em with my blood.

But I conjure you not to rack my soul,
Nor hurry my wild thoughts to perfect madness :
Should now Darius' awful ghost appear
And you, my mother, stand beseeching by,
I would persist to death, and keep my vow.

Rox. This fortitude of soul compels my wonder.
(*Aside.*)

Sys. Hence, from my sight ! ungrateful wretch,
begone !

And hide thee where bright virtue never shone ;
For, in the sight of heaven, I here renounce,
And cast thee off an alien to my blood.

[*Exeunt Sys. R.H. Cas. L.H.*

Rox. (*Advancing.*) Forgive, great queen, th'
intrusion of a stranger ;

With grief Roxana sees Statira weep ;
I've heard, and much applaud your fix'd resolve,
To quit the world for Alexander's sake ;
And yet I fear, so greatly he adores you,
That he will rather choose to die of sorrow,
Than live for the despis'd Roxana's charms.

Sta. Spare, madam, spare your counterfeited
fears ;

You know your beauty, and have prov'd its pow'r ;
 Tho' humbly born, have you not captive held,
 In love's soft chains, the conq'ror of the world ?
 Away to libertines, and boast thy conquest ;
 A shameful conquest !—In his hours of riot,
 When wine prevail'd, and virtue lost its influence,
 Then, only then, Roxana could surprise
 My Alexander's heart.

Rox. Affected girl,
 To some romantic grove's sequester'd gloom
 Thy sickly virtue wou'd, it seems, retire,
 To shun the triumphs of a favour'd rival.
 In vain thou fliest—for there, ev'n there I'll
 haunt thee ;
 Plague thee all day, and torture thee all night :
 There shalt thou learn, in what extatic joys
 Roxana revels with the first of men ;
 And, as thou hear'st the rapt'rous scene recited,
 With frantic jealousy thou'lt madly curse
 Thy own weak charms, that could not fix the
 lover. [shrinks,

Sta. How weak is woman ! at the storm she
 Dreads the drawn sword, and trembles at the
 thunder ;

Yet, when strong jealousy inflames her soul,
 The sword may glitter, and the tempest roar,
 She scorns the danger, and provokes her fate.
 Rival, I thank thee—'Thou hast fir'd my soul,
 And rais'd a storm beyond thy pow'r to lay ;
 Soon shalt thou tremble at the dire effects,
 And curse, too late, the folly that undid thee.

(Crosses to L.H.)

Rox. Sure the disdain'd Statira dares not mean it.

Sta. By all my hopes of happiness I dare :
And know, proud woman, what a mother's threats,
A sister's sighs, and Alexander's tears,
Could not effect, thy rival rage has done.
I'll see the king, in spite of all I swore,
Though curs'd, that thou may'st never see him more.

Enter ALEXANDER, HEPHESTION, CLYTUS, POLYPERCHON, THESSALUS, *and* EUMENES, L.H.

Alex. Oh, my Statira ! thou relentless fair !
Turn thine eyes on me—I would talk to them.
What shall I say to work upon thy soul ?
What words, what looks, can melt thee to forgiveness ?

Sta. Talk of Roxana, and the conquer'd Indies,
Thy great adventures, thy successful love,
And I will listen to the rapt'rous tale ;
But rather shun me, shun a desperate wretch,
Resign'd to sorrow, and eternal woe.

Alex. Oh ! I could die, with transport, die before thee ;
Would'st thou but, as I lay convuls'd in death,
Cast a kind look, or drop a tender tear.

Rox. Am I then fall'n so low in thy esteem,
That for another thou would'st rather die,
Than live for me ? — How am I alter'd, tell me,
Since last at Susa, with repeated oaths,

You swore the conquest of the world afforded
Less joy, less glory, than Roxana's love ?

Alex. Take, take that conquer'd world, dispose
of crowns,
And canton out the empires of the globe ;
But leave me, madam, with repentant tears,
And undissembled sorrows, to atone
The wrongs I've offer'd to this injur'd excellence.

Rox. Yes, I will go, ungrateful as thou art !
Bane to my life, and murd'rer of my peace,
I will be gone ; this last disdain has cur'd me—
But have a care—I warn you not to trust me ;
Or, by the gods, that witness to thy perjuries,
I'll raise a fire that shall consume you both,
Tho' I partake the ruin. [*Exit Roxana, L.H.*]

Sta. Alexander !—Oh, is it possible ?
Immortal gods ! can guilt appear so lovely ?
Yet, yet I pardon, I forgive thee all. [sounds,

Alex. Forgive me all ! Oh, catch the heavenly
Catch 'em, ye winds, and, as you fly, disperse
The rapt'rous tidings through the extended
world,

'That all may share in Alexander's joy !

Sta. Yes, dear deceiver, I forgive thee all,
But longer dare not hear thy charming tongue ;
For while I hear thee, my resolves give way :
Be therefore quick, and take thy last farewell ;
Farewell, my love—Eternally farewell !

Alex. Go, then, inhuman, triumph in my pains,
Feed on the pangs that rend this wretched heart ;
For now 'tis plain you never lov'd.—Statira !—
Oh, I could sound that charming, cruel name,

Till the tir'd echo faint with repetition.

Oh stay, my Statira ! (*Kneels.*)

I swear, my queen, I'll not outlive our parting :
My soul grows still as death.—Say, wilt thou
pardon :—

'Tis all I ask ;—wilt thou forgive the transports
Of a deep-wounded heart, and all is well ?

Sta. Rise ; and may heav'n forgive you, like
Statira !

Alex. You are too gracious—Clytus, bear me
hence.—

When I am laid i' th' earth, yield her the world.—
'There's something here, that heaves as cold as
ice, [ever !

That stops my breath.—Farewell, farewell for

Sta. Hold off, and let me run into his arms :

My life, my love, my lord, my Alexander !

If thy Statira's love can give thee joy,

Revive, and be immortal as the gods.

Alex. Oh, let me press thee in my eager arms,
And strain thee hard to my transported breast !

Sta. But shall Roxana—

Alex. Let her not be nam'd.

Oh, how shall I repay you for this goodness ?

And you, my fellow warriors, who could grieve

For your lost king ? But talk of griefs no more ;

The banquet waits, and I invite you all ;

My equals in the throne, as in the grave,

Without distinction come, and share my joys.

Cly. Excuse me, sir, if I for once am absent.

Alex. Excuse thee, Clytus ! None shall be
excus'd.

All revel out the day, 'tis my command ;

Gay as the Persian god, ourself will stand,
With a crown'd goblet in our lifted hand ;
Young Ammon and Statira shall go round,
While antic measures beat the burthen'd ground,
And to the vaulted skies our trumpet's clangors
sound.

[*Flourish of trumpets, and exeunt, L.H.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Square before the Palace.*

Enter CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, and PERDICCAS, L.H.

Cly. Urge me no more ; I hate the Persian
dress :

Nor should the king be angry at the rev'rence
I owe my country—sacred are her customs,
And honest Clytus will to death observe 'em.
Oh ! let me rot in Macedonian rags,
Or, like Calisthenes, be cag'd for life,
Rather than shine in fashions of the east.

Per. Let me, brave Clytus, as a friend entreat
you.

Heph. What virtue is there that adorns a throne,
Exalts the heart, and dignifies the man,
Which shines not brightly in our royal master ?

And yet perversely you'll oppose his will,
And thwart an innocent, unhurtful humour.

Cly. Unhurtful! Oh! 'tis monstrous affectation,
Pregnant with venom, in its nature black,
And not to be excus'd!—Shall man, weak man,
Exact the rev'rence which we pay to heaven,
And bid his fellow-creatures kneel before him,
And yet be innocent? Hephestion, no;
The pride that lays a claim to adoration,
Insults our reason, and provokes the gods.

Per. Yet what was Jove, the god whom we
adore?

Was he not once a man, and rais'd to heaven
For gen'rous acts, and virtues more than human?

Heph. By all his thunder, and his sov'reign
pow'r,

I'll not believe the world yet ever felt
An arm like Alexander's—Not that god
You nam'd, though riding in a car of fire,
Could in a shorter space do greater deeds;
Or more effectually have taught mankind
To bend submissive, and confess his sway.

Cly. I tell you, boy, that Clytus loves the king
As well as you, or any soldier here,
Yet I disdain to sooth his growing pride;
The hero charms me, but the god offends.

Heph. Then go not to the banquet.

Cly. Why, I was bid,
Young minion, was I not, as well as you?
I'll go, my friends, in this old habit, thus,
And laugh, and drink the king's health heartily;
And while you, blushing, bow your heads to earth,
And hide them in the dust,—I'll stand erect,

Straight as a spear, the pillar of my country,
And be by so much nearer to the gods.

Heph. But see, the king appears.

Enter ALEXANDER, STATIRA, THESSALUS, and Guards,
R.H. PARISATIS and EUMENES, L.H.

Par. Oh, gracious monarch !

Spare him, Oh, spare Lysimachus his life !
I know you will—the brave delight in mercy.

Alex. Shield me, Statira, shield me from her
sorrows.

Par. Save him, Oh, save him, ere it be too late !
Speak the kind word, let not your soldier perish
For one rash action, by despair occasion'd.
I'll follow thus for ever on my knees ;

You shall not pass. Statira, Oh, intreat him !

Alex. Oh, madam !—take her, take her from
about me ;

Her streaming eyes assail my very soul,
And shake my best resolves.

Sta. Did I not break
Through all for you ? Nay, now, my lord, you
must.

By all th' obedience I have paid you long,
By all your passion, sighs, and tender looks,
Oh, save a prince, whose only crime is love !
I had not join'd in this bold suit, my lord,
But that it adds new lustre to your honour.

Alex. Honour ! what's that ? Has not Statira
said it ?—

Fly, Clytus, snatch him from the jaws of death,

And to the royal banquet bring him straight ;
Bring him in triumph, fit for loads of honour.

[*Exeunt Clytus, Hephestion, and Parisatis, L.H.*

Sta. Why are you thus beyond expression kind ?
Oh, my lov'd lord ! my fond, my raptur'd heart,
By gratitude and love at once inflam'd,
With wild emotion flutters in my breast ;
Oh, teach it, then, instruct it how to thank you !

Alex. Excellent woman !

'Tis not in nature to support such joy.

Sta. Go, my best love ; unbend you at the
banquet ;

Indulge in joy, and laugh your cares away ;
While, in the bowers of great Semiramis,
I dress your bed with all the sweets of nature,
And crown it, as the altar of our loves ;
Where I will lay me down, and softly mourn,
But never close my eyes till you return.

[*Exit Statira, R.H.*

Alex. Is she not more than mortal can desire !
As Venus lovely, and as Dian chaste !
And yet, I know not why, our parting shocks me ;
A ghastly paleness sat upon her brow ;
Her voice, like dying echoes, fainter grew ;
And, as I wrung her by the rosy fingers,
Methought the strings of my great heart were
crack'd.

What could it mean ? Forward Laomedon.

Enter ROXANA, CASSANDER, and POLYPERCHON, L.H.

Why, madam, gaze you thus ?

Rox. For a last look,
And to imprint the memory of my wrongs ;
Roxana's wrongs, on Alexander's mind.

Alex. On to the banquet.

[*Exeunt Alexander and his train, L.II.*]

Rox. Ha ! with such disdain !
So unconcern'd ! Oh, I could tear myself,
Him, you, and all the hateful world to atoms !

Cas. Still keep this spirit up, preserve it still,
And know us for your friends. We like your rage ;
'Tis lovely in you, and your wrongs require it.
Here, in the sight of heaven, Cassander swears,
Unaw'd by death, to second your revenge.
Speak but the word, and, swift as thought can fly,
The tyrant falls a victim to your fury.

Rox. Shall he, then, die ? Shall I consent to
kill him ?

I, that have lov'd him with that eager fondness,
Shall I consent to have him basely murder'd,
And see him clasp'd in the cold arms of death ?
Worlds should not tempt me to the deed of horror.

Poly. The weak fond scruples of your love
might pass,
Were not the empire of the world concern'd :
But, madam, think, when time shall teach his
tongue,

How will the glorious infant, which you bear,
Arraign his partial mother, for refusing
To fix him on the throne, which here we offer ?

Cas. If Alexander lives, you cannot reign,
Nor will your child. Old Sysigambis plans
Your sure destruction. Boldly then prevent her :
Give but the word, and Alexander dies.

Poly. Not he alone; the Persian race shall bleed :

At your command, one universal ruin
Shall, like a deluge, whelm the eastern world,
Till gloriously we raise you to the throne.

Rox. But, till the mighty ruin be accomplish'd,
Where can Roxana fly th' avenging wrath
Of those who must succeed this godlike man ?

Cas. Would you vouchsafe in these expanded
arms

To seek a refuge, what could hurt you here ?
Here you might reign, with undiminish'd lustre,
Queen of the East, and empress of my soul.

Rox. Disgrac'd Roxana ! whither art thou
fallen ?

Till this curs'd hour I never was unhappy ;
There's not one mark of former majesty
To awe the slave that offers at my honour.

Cas. Impute not, madam, my unbounded
passion

To want of rev'rence—I have lov'd you long.

Rox. Peace, villain, peace, and let me hear
no more.

Think'st thou I'd leave the bosom of a god,
And stoop to thee, thou moving piece of earth ?
Hence, from my sight, and never more presume
To meet my eyes ; for, mark me, if thou dar'st,
To Alexander I'll unfold thy treason ;
Whose life, in spite of all his wrongs to me,
Shall still be sacred, and above thy malice.

Cas. (*Kneels.*) By your own life, the greatest
oath, I swear,

Cassander's passion from this hour is dumb ;

And, as the best atonement I can make,
Statira dies, the victim of your vengeance.

Rox. Cassander, rise ; 'tis ample expiation.
Yes, rival, yes ; this night shall be thy last ;
This night, I know, is destin'd for thy triumph,
And gives my Alexander to thy arms.
Oh, murd'rous thought !

Poly. The bow'rs of great Semiramis are made
The scene of love ; Perdiccas holds the guard.

Cas. Now is your time, when Alexander revels,
And the whole court re-echoes with his riot,
To end her, and with her to end your fears.
Give me but half the Zogdian slaves that wait
you,

And deem her dead : nor shall a soul escape
That serves your rival, to disperse the news.

Rox. By me they die, Perdiccas and Statira ;
Hence with thy aid, I neither ask nor want it ;
But will myself conduct the slaves to battle.
Were she to fall by any arm but mine,
Well might she murmur, and arraign her stars.
Rival, rejoice, and, pleas'd, resign thy breath,
Roxana's vengeance grants thee noble death.

[*Exit Roxana, L.H.*]

Cas. All but her Jove, this Semele disdains.
We must be quick—She may, perhaps, betray
The great design, and frustrate our revenge.

Poly. Has Philip got instruction how to act ?

Cas. He has, my friend ; and, faithful to our
cause,

Resolves to execute the fatal order.

Bear him this phial ; it contains a poison
Of that exalted force, that deadly nature,

Should Æsculapius drink it, in an hour,
 For then it works, the god himself were mortal ;
 I drew it from Nonacri's horrid spring :
 Mix'd with his wine a single drop gives death,
 And sends him howling to the shades below.

Poly. I know its power, for I have seen it
 try'd ;

Pains of all sorts through every nerve and artery
 At once it scatters ; burns at once and freezes ;
 Till, by extremity of torture forc'd,
 The soul consent to leave her joyless home,
 And seek for ease in worlds unknown to this.

Cas. Now let us part :—with Thessalus and
 Philip

Haste to the banquet ; at his second call
 Let this be given him, and it crowns our hopes.

[*Exit Polyperchon, L.H.*

Now, Alexander, now we shall be quits ;
 Death for a blow is interest indeed. [*Exit, R.H.*

SCENE II.—*The Palace.*

ALEXANDER, POLYPERCHON, CASSANDER, THESSALUS,
 EUMENES, *Guards, &c. discovered at a Banquet.*--
A flourish of Trumpets, Drums, &c.

Alex. To our immortal health, and our fair
 queen's !— [round,
 All drink it deep ; and, while the bowl goes
 Mars and Bellona join to make us music ;
 A hundred bulls be offer'd to the sun,
 White as his beams ; speak the big voice of war ;

Strike all our drums, and sound our silver
trumpets ;

Provoke the gods to follow our example
In bowls of nectar, and replying thunder.

(Flourish of trumpets, drums, &c.)

Enter CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, and LYSIMACHUS,
bloody, L.H.

Cly. Long live the king ; long live great Alex-
ander ; [laurels,
And conquest crown his arms with deathless
Propitious to his friends, and all he favours !

Alex. Did I not give command you should pre-
serve Lysimachus ?

Heph. Dread sir, you did.

Alex. What then

Portend these bloody marks ?

Heph. Ere we arriv'd,
Perdiccas had already plac'd the prince
In a lone court, all but his hands unarm'd.

Cly. On them were gauntlets ; such was his
desire,
In death to shew the difference betwixt
The blood of Eacus, and common men.

Forth issuing from his den, amaz'd we saw
The horrid savage, with whose hideous roar
The palace shook ; his angry eye-balls glaring
With triple fury, menac'd death and ruin.

Heph. With unconcern, the gallant prince ad-
vanc'd ;
Now, Parisatis, be the glory thine,
But mine the danger, where his only words ;

For, as he spoke, the furious beast descried him,
And rush'd, outrageous, to devour his prey.

Cly. Agile and vigorous, he avoids the shock
With a slight wound ; and, as the lion turn'd,
Thrust the gauntlet, arm, and all, into his throat,
And, with Herculean strength, tears forth his
tongue ;

Foaming and bloody, the disabled savage
Sunk to the earth, and plough'd it with his teeth ;
While, with an active bound, your conqu'ring
soldier

Leap'd on his back, and dash'd his scull in pieces.

Alex By all my laurels, twas a godlike act ;
And 'tis my glory, as it shall be thine,
That Alexander could not pardon thee.
Oh, my brave soldier, think not all the pray'rs
And tears of the lamenting queens could move me
Like what thou hast perform'd ! Grow to my
breast. [my guilt,

Lys. Thus, self-condemn'd, and conscious of
How shall I stand such unexampled goodness ?
Oh, pardon, sir, the transports of despair,
The frantic outrage of ungovern'd love !
E'en when I show'd the greatest want of reve-
rence,

I could have died with rapture in your service.

Alex. Lysimachus, we both have been trans-
ported ;

But, from this hour, be certain of my heart.

A lion be the impress of thy shield ;

And that gold armour we from Porus won,

Thy king presents thee--But thy wounds ask rest.

Lys. I have no wounds, dread sir ; or, if I had,
Were they all mortal, they should stream un-
minded,

When Alexander was the glorious health.

Alex. Thy hand, Hephestion. Clasp him to
thy heart,

And wear him ever near thee Parisatis
Shall now be his who serves me best in war.
Neither reply—but mark the charge I give—
Live, live as friends ; you will, you must, you
shall ;—

'Tis a god gives you life.

Cly. Oh, monstrous vanity !

Alex. Ha ! what says Clytus ? who am I ?

Cly. The son
Of good king Philip.

Alex. By my kindred gods,
'Tis false :—great Ammon gave me birth.

Cly. I've done. [a robe there.

Alex. Clytus, what means that dress ? Give him
Take it, and wear it.

Cly. Sir, the wine, the weather
Has heated me ; besides, you know my humour.

Alex. Oh ! 'tis not well ! I'd rather perish,
burn,

Than be so singular and froward.

Cly. So would I—
Burn, hang, or drown ; but in a better cause.
I'll drink, or fight, for sacred majesty
With any here. Fill me another bowl.
Will you excuse me ?

Alex. You will be excus'd.
But let him have his humour ; he is old.

Cly. So was your father, sir; this to his mem'ry!
Sound all the trumpets there.

Alex. They shall not sound
Till the king drinks. Sure, I was born to wage
Eternal war!—All are my enemies,
Whom I could tame—But let the sports go on.

Lys. Nay, Clytus, you that could advise so
well—

Alex. Let him persist, be positive, and proud,
Envious and sullen 'mongst the nobler souls,
Like an infernal spirit that hath stol'n
From hell, and mingled with the mirth of gods.

Cly. When gods grow hot, no difference I
know [yet,
'Twixt them and devils—Fill me Greek wine:
Yet fuller; I want spirits.

Alex. Let me have music. [groans

Cly. Music for boys—Clytus would hear the
Of dying soldiers, and the neigh of steeds;
Or, if I must be pester'd with shrill sounds,
Give me the cries of matrons in sack'd towns.

Heph. Let us, Lysimachus, awake the king;
A heavy gloom is gathering on his brow.
Kneel all, with humblest adoration, kneel,
And let a health to Jove's great son go round.

Alex. Sound, sound, that all the universe may
hear.

Oh, for the voice of Jove! the world should know
(*A loud flourish of Trumpets.*)

The kindness of my people—Rise, Oh, rise!—
My hands, my arms, my heart, are ever your's.

Cly. I did not kiss the earth, nor must your
I am unworthy, sir. [hand;

Alex. Thou art, indeed!—

Thou enviest the great honour of thy master—
Sit, all my friends—Now let us talk of war ;
The noblest subject for a soldier's mouth ;
And speak, speak freely else you love me not ;
Who, think you, was the greatest general
That ever led an army to the field ?

Heph. A chief so great, so fortunately brave,
And justly so renown'd as Alexander,
The radiant sun, since first his beams gave light,
Never yet saw

Lys Such was not Cyrus, nor the fam'd Alcides,
Nor great Achilles, whose tempestuous sword
Laid Troy in ashes, though the warring gods
Oppos'd him.

Alex. Oh, you flatter me ! you flatter me !

Cly. They do, indeed ; and yet you love 'em
for't,

But hate old Clytus for his hardy virtue.—
Come, shall I speak a man, with equal bravery,
A better general, and experter soldier ?

Alex Instruct me, sir ; I should be glad to
learn. [march,

Cly. Your father, Philip.—I have seen him
And fought beneath his dreadful banner, where
The boldest at this table would have trembled.
Nay, frown not, sir, you cannot look me dead.
When Greeks join'd Greeks, then was the tug
of war,

The labour'd battle sweat, and conquest bled.
Why should I fear to speak a bolder truth,
Than e'er the lying priests of Ammon told you ?
Philip fought men, but Alexander, women.

Alex. Proud spite, and burning envy, by the
Is then my glory come to this at last, [gods!
To conquer women ! Nay, he said, the stoutest,
The stoutest here would tremble at his dangers.
In all the sickness, all the wounds, I bore.
When, from my reins, the javelin's head was cut,
Lysimachus, Hephestion, speak, Perdiccas,
Did I once tremble ?—Oh, the cursed falsehood !—
Did I once shake or groan ? or act beneath
The dauntless resolution of a king ?

Lys. Wine has transported him.

Alex. No, 'tis meer malice—
I was a woman too, at Oxydrace,
When, planting on the walls a scaling ladder,
I mounted, spite of show'rs of stones, bars,
 arrows,
And all the lumber which they thunder'd down ;
When you, beneath, cried out, and spread your
 arms,
That I should leap among you—did I so ?

Lys. Dread sir, the old man knows not what he says.

Alex Was I a woman, when, like Mercury,
I leap'd the walls, and flew amidst the foe,
And, like a baited lion, dy'd myself
All over in the blood of those bold hunters ;
Till, spent with toil, I battled on my knees,
Pluck'd forth the darts that made my shield a
forest, [fury ?—
And hurl'd 'em back with most unconquer'd
Then, shining in my arms I sunn'd the field,
Mov'd, spoke, and fought, and was myself a war.

Cly. 'Twas all bravado ; for, before you leap'd,
You saw that I had burst the gates asunder.

Alex. Oh, that thou wert but young again, and
vigorous,
That I might strike thee prostrate to the earth
For this audacious lie, thou feeble dotard !

Cly. I know the reason why you use me thus.
I sav'd you from the sword of bold Rhesaces,
Else had your godship slumber'd in the dust ;
And most ungratefully you hate me for it.

Alex. Hence from the banquet !—Thus far I
forgive thee. [more,

Cly. First try, for none can want forgiveness
To have your own bold blasphemies forgiven,
The shameful riots of a vicious life,
Philotas' murder——

Alex. Ha ! what said the traitor ? [hence.

Heph. Clytus, withdraw ; Eumenes, force him

Cly. No, let him send me, if I must begone,
To Philip, Attalus, Calisthenes,
To great Parmenio, and his slaughter'd sons.

Alex. Give me a javelin.

Lys. Hold, mighty sir.

Alex. Sirrah ! Off,
Lest I at once strike through his heart and thine,
Begone to Philip, Attalus, Calisthenes ;
(*Stabs him.*)

And let bold subjects learn, by thy example,
Not to provoke the patience of their prince.
(*Clytus falls.*)

Cly. The rage of wine is drown'd in gushing
blood.

Oh, Alexander ! I have been to blame ;

Hate me not after death ; for I repent,
That I so far have urg'd your noble nature.

Alex. What's this I hear ! Say on, my dying soldier.

Cly. I shou'd have kill'd myself, had I but liv'd
To be once sober ; but now I fall with honour ;
My own hands wou'd have brought foul death.
Oh pardon. (*Dies.*) [geance done !

Alex. Then I am lost ! What has my ven-
Who is it thou hast slain ? Clytus!--what was he ?

The faithfulest subject, worthiest counsellor,
The bravest soldier ! He who sav'd thy life,
Fighting bare-headed at the river Granick ;—
For a rash word, spoke in the heat of wine,
The poor, the honest Clytus thou hast slain ;
Clytus, thy friend, thy guardian, thy preserver !

Heph. Remove the body, it inflames his sorrow. [part.

Alex. None dare touch him ; we must never
Cruel Hephestion and Lysimachus, [Oh !
That had the power, yet wou'd not hold me !—

Lys. Dear sir, we did.

Alex. I know ye did ; ye held me
Like a wild beast, to let me go again
With greater violence.—Oh, ye've undone me !
Excuse it not,—you that cou'd stop a lion,
(*To Lys.*)

Cou'd not turn me ?—ye should have drawn
your swords,

And barr'd my rage with their advancing points ;
Made reason glitter in my dazzled eyes,
Till I had seen the precipice before me :

That had been noble, that had shewn the friend.
Clytus wou'd so have done to save your lives.

Lys. When men shall hear how highly you
were urg'd— [glory,

Alex. No; you have let me stain my rising
Which else had ended brighter than the sun.

Oh, I am all a blot, which seas of tears,
And my heart's blood, can never wash away;
Yet, 'tis but just I try, and on the point,
Still reeking, hurl my black polluted breast.

Heph. Oh, sacred sir—it shall not—must not be.

Lys. Forgive, dread sir, forgive my pious
hands,
'That dare, in duty, to disarm my master.

Alex. Yes, cruel men, ye now can shew your
strength;

Here's not a slave, but dares oppose my justice,
Yet none had courage to prevent this murder.

But I will render all endeavours vain,
That tend to save my life—Here will I lie,
Close to my murder'd soldier's bleeding side,
Thus clasping his cold body in my arms,
Till death has closed my eyes, like his, for ever.

(Throws himself on the body of Clytus.)

Enter PERDICCAS, R.H.

Per. Treason! foul treason! Hephestion,
where's the king? [hath slain.

Heph. There, by old Clytus' side, whom he

Per. Rise, sacred sir, and haste to save the
queen:

Roxana, fill'd with furious jealousy,

Came with a guard, unmark'd: she gain'd the
bow'r,

And broke upon me with such a sudden fury,
That all have perish'd who oppos'd her rage.

Alex. What says Perdiccas? Is the queen in
danger?

Per. Haste sir, to your Statira, or she dies.

Alex. Thus from the grave I rise to save her
life.— [move,

All draw your swords, on wings of lightning
Young Ammon leads you, and the cause is love;
When I rush on, sure none will dare to stay;

'Tis beauty calls, and glory leads the way.

(*Flourish of Trumpets, Drums, &c.*)

[*Exeunt, R.H.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Gardens of Semiramis.*

STATIRA *discovered asleep, on a Sopha.*

Sta. Bless me, ye pow'rs above, and guard my
virtue! [you fled?

Where are you fled, dear shades? Where are
'Twas but a dream; and yet I saw and heard
My royal parents, who, while pious care

Sat on their faded cheeks, pronounc'd with tears,
 Tears such as angels weep, this hour my last.
 But hence with fear—my Alexander comes,
 And fear and danger ever fled from him.
 My Alexander!—Wou'd that he were here !
 For Oh, I tremble, and a thousand terrors
 Rush in upon me, and alarm my heart.

(Distant flourish of Trumpets.)

But hark, 'tis he, and all my fears are fled ;
 My life, my joy, my Alexander comes.

Rox. (Within.) Make fast the gate with all
 its massy bars ;
 At length we've conquer'd this stupendous height,
 And reach'd the grove.

Sta. Ye guardian gods, defend me !
 Roxana's voice ! Then all the vision's true,
 And die I must.

Enter ROXANA, L.H.

Rox. Secure the brazen gate.
 Where is my rival ? 'tis Roxana calls. [pride,
Sta. And what is she, who, with such tow'ring
 Wou'd awe a princess that is born above her ?

Rox. Behold this dagger !—'Tis thy fate, Statira !

Behold, and meet it as becomes a queen.
 Fain wou'd I find thee worthy of my vengeance ;
 Here, take my weapon then ; and, if thou dar'st—

Sta. How little know'st thou what Statira
 dares !

Yes, cruel woman ! yes, I dare meet death
 With a resolve, at which thy coward heart

Wou'd shrink ; for terror haunts the guilty mind ;
While conscious innocence, that knows no fear,
Can smiling pass, and scorn thy idle threats.

Rox. Return, fair insolent ! return, I say.
Dar'st thou, presumptuous, to invade my rights ?
Restore him quickly to my longing arms,
And with him give me back his broken vows,
For perjur'd as he is, he still is mine,
Or I will rend him from thy bleeding heart.

Sta. Alas, Roxana, 'tis not in my power ;
I cannot if I would—And, oh, ye gods,
What were the world to Alexander's loss !

Rox. Oh, sorceress, to thy accursed charms
I owe the frenzy that distracts my soul ;
To them I owe my Alexander's loss.
Too late thou tremblest at my just revenge,
My wrongs cry out, and vengeance will have
way. *(Holds up the dagger.)*

Sta. Hold, hold, thy threat'ning hand advanc'd
in air.

I read my sentence written in thy eyes :
Yet, Oh, Roxana, on thy black revenge
One kindly ray of female pity beam,
And give me death in Alexander's presence.

Rox. Not for the world's wide empire
should'st thou see him.
Fool ! but for him thou might'st unheeded live ;
For his sake only art thou doom'd to die.
The sole remaining joy that glads my soul,
Is to deprive thee of the heart I've lost.
(Flourish of Trumpets.)

Enter a Slave, L.H.

Slave. Madam, the king and all his guards are
come ;
With frantic rage they thunder at the gate,
And must, ere this, have gain'd admittance.
[*Exit Slave, L.H.*

Rox. Ha !
Too long I've trifled ; let me then redeem
The time mispent, and make great vengeance
sure.

Sta. Is Alexander, Oh, ye gods, so nigh,
And can he not preserve me from her fury ?

Rox. Nor he, nor heav'n, shall shield thee
from my justice.
Die, sorc'ress, die, and all my wrongs die with
thee. (*Stabs her.*)

Alex. (Without.) Away, ye slaves, stand off !—
Quick let me fly [shall stop me.
On lightning's wings ;—nor heav'n nor earth,

*Enter ALEXANDER, LYSIMACHUS, CASSANDER, PER-
DICCAS, THESSALUS, Officers, and Guards, L.H.*

Ha !—Oh, my soul, my queen, my love, Sta-
tira !
These wounds ! are these my promis'd joys ?
Sta. Alas !
My only love, my best and dearest blessing,
Wou'd I had died before you enter'd here ;
For thus delighted, while I gaze upon thee.
Death grows more horrid, and I'm loth to leave
thee.

Alex. Thou shalt not leave me—Cruel, cruel stars ! [fiend,

Oh, where's the monster, where's the horrid
That struck at innocence, and murder'd thee ?

Rox. Behold the wretch, who, desperate of
thy love,

In jealous madness gave the fatal blow. [sight.

Alex. To dungeons, tortures, drag her from my

Sta. My soul is on the wing. Spare

Roxana's life.—'Twas love of you that caused
The death she gave me. And, Oh, sometimes
think,

Amidst your revels, think on your poor queen ;
And, ere the cheerful bowl salute your lips,
Enrich it with a tear, and I am happy. (*Dies.*)

Alex. Yet, ere thou tak'st thy flight—She's
gone, she's gone !

All, all is hush'd ; no music now is heard ;
The roses wither ; and the fragrant breath
That wak'd their sweets, shall never wake 'em
more. [call her.

Rox. Weep not, my lord ! no sorrow can re-
Oh, turn your eyes, and, in Roxana's arms,
You'll find fond love and everlasting truth.

Alex. Hence, from my sight, and thank my
dear Statira,

That yet thou art alive.

Rox. Yes, thus I'll fasten on your sacred robe ;
Thus, on my knees, for ever cling around you,
Till you forgive me, or till death divide us.

Alex. Hence, fury, hence : there's not a glance
of thine,

But, like a basilisk, comes wing'd with death.

Rox. Oh, speak not thus, to one who kneels
for mercy.

Think, for whose sake it was I madly plung'd
Into a crime abhorrent to my nature.

Alex. Off, murd'ress, off! for ever shun my
sight!

My eyes detest thee, for thy soul is ruin.

Rox Barbarian! yes, I will for ever shun thee,
Repeated injuries have steel'd my heart,
And I cou'd curse myself for being kind.

If there is any majesty above,
That has revenge in store for perjur'd love,
Send, heav'n, the swiftest ruin on his head!
Strike the destroyer! lay the victor dead!
But what are curses? Curses will not kill,
Nor ease the tortures I am doom'd to feel.

[*Exit Roxana, L.H.*

Alex. Oh, my fair star, I shall be shortly with
thee!

What means this deadly dew upon my forehead?
My heart too heaves!—

Cas. The poison works!

Enter EUMENES, L.H.

Eume. Pardon, dread sir, a fatal messenger.
The royal Sysigambis is no more.
Struck with the horror of Statira's fate,
She soon expir'd, and, with her latest breath,
Left Parisatis to Lysimachus.
But what, I fear, most deeply will affect you,
Your lov'd Hephestion's—

Alex. Dead! then he is bless'd!

But here, here lies my fate. Hephestion ! Clytus !
 My victories all for ever folded up
 In this dear body. Here my banner's lost,
 My standard's triumphs gone.—Oh, when, Oh,
 when,
 Shall I be mad indeed ?

[*Exeunt all but Cassander and Thessalus, L.H.*

Cas. He's gone—but whither ?—follow, 'Thessalus,

Attend his steps, and let me know what passes.

[*Exeunt Thessalus, L.H. and Cassander, R.H.*

SCENE II.—*An Antichamber in the Palace.*

Enter CASSANDER, R.H.

Cas. Vengeance, lie still, thy cravings shall
 be sated.

Death roams at large, the furies are unchain'd,
 And murder plays her mighty master-piece.

Enter POLYPERCHON, L.H.

Saw you the king ? He parted hence this mo-
 ment. [looks,

Poly. Yes ; with disorder'd wildness in his
 He rush'd along, till, with a casual glance,
 He saw me where I stood ; then stopping short,
 Draw near, he cried—and grasp'd my hand in
 his,

Where more than fevers rag'd in ev'ry vein.
 Oh, Polyperchon ! I have lost my queen !
 Statira's dead !—and, as he spoke, the tears

Sticks 'cross my shoulders; the sad venom flies,
Like light'ning thro' my flesh, my blood, my
marrow.

Lys. How fierce his fever!

Alex. Ha! what a change of torments I endure!
A bolt of ice runs hissing through my bowels;—
'Tis, sure, the arm of death. Give me a chair;
Cover me, for I freeze, and my teeth chatter,
And my knees knock together.

Eume. Have mercy, heav'n!

Alex. Who talks of heav'n?

I burn, I burn again;— [Tygris!

The war grows wond'rous hot;—hey for the
Bear me, Bucephalus, amongst the billows.

Oh, 'tis a noble beast; I wou'd not change him
For the best horse the sun has in his stable;
For they are hot, their mangers full of coals;
Their manes are flakes of light'ning, curls of
fire;

And their red tails, like meteors, whisk about.

Lys. Help, all! Eumenes help.

Alex. Ha! ha! ha! I shall die with laughter.
Parmenio, Clytus, do you see yon fellow,
That ragged soldier, that poor tatter'd Greek?
See how he puts to flight the gaudy Persians,
With nothing but a rusty helmet on, through
which

The grisly bristles of his pushing beard
Drive 'em like pikes—ha! ha! ha!

Per. How wild he talks!

Lys. Yet warring in his wildness.

Alex. Sound, sound! keep your ranks close;
aye, now they come.

Oh the brave din, the noblest clank of arms !—
Charge, charge apace ; and let the phalanx
move ;

Darius comes—aye, 'tis Darius :

I see, I know him by the sparkling plumes,
And his gold chariot, drawn by ten white horses :
But, like a tempest, thus I pour upon him—
He bleeds ; with that last blow I brought him
down :

He tumbles, take him, snatch the imperial crown.
They fly, they fly ; follow, follow : Victoria,
Victoria, Victoria—(*Throws himself into the arms
of the Soldiers.*)

Per. Let's bear him softly to his bed.

Alex. Hold ; the least motion gives me sudden
death ;

My vital spirits are quite parch'd, burnt up,
And all my smoky entrails turn'd to ashes.

Lys When you, the brightest star that ever
shone,

Shall set, it must be night with us for ever.

Alex. Let me embrace you all, before I die.—
Weep not, my dear companions ; the good gods
Shall send ye in my stead a nobler prince,
One that shall lead ye forth with matchless con-
duct.

Lys. Break not our hearts with such unkind
expressions. [for Mars.

Per. We will not part with you, nor change

Alex. Perdicas, take this ring,
And see me laid in the temple of Jupiter Ammon.

Lys. To whom does your dread majesty be-
queath

The empire of the world ?

Alex. To him that is most worthy.

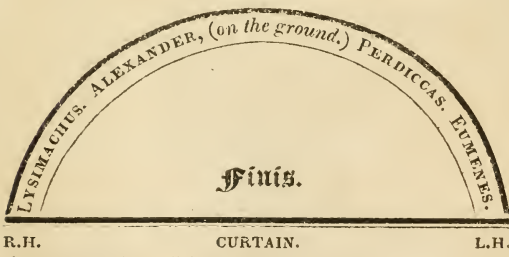
Per. When will you, sacred sir, that we should
give

To your great memory, those divine honours
Which such exalted virtue does deserve?

Alex. When you are all most happy, and in
peace.

Your hands—Oh, father, if I have discharg'd
The duty of a man to empire born;
If, by unwearied toil, I have deserv'd
The vast renown of thy adopted son,
Accept this soul which thou didst first inspire,
And which this sigh thus gives thee back again.
(*Dies.—Curtain falls to slow music.*)

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.





Epilogue.

SPOKEN BY ROXANA.

ARRAIGN'D for murder—lo ! I stand before ye,
But ere you pass my sentence, hear my story.
What passive woman, were she in my place,
Cou'd brook such usage ? Horrible disgrace !
To kiss the saucy minx before my face ;
Hang on her neck, and sigh, and swear, and bellow—
Oh, I've not patience with the filthy fellow.
What, tho' one world my hero deem'd deficient,
One wife for any hero's sure sufficient.
You must allow 'twou'd any mortal vex
To lose the only comfort of one's sex.
Her nuptial right—which of you all wou'd share it ?
And half a husband—Gods ! what wife cou'd bear it ?
But what, still worse than all the rest, provokes me,
To think his crowns and sceptres e'er cou'd coax me.
Let all the empire of the world's wide span
Be her's—but not an atom of my man.
Methinks I hear each wedded fair-one cry,
Well done, Roxana——she deserv'd to die.
What Christian wife cou'd bear such double-dealing ?
And, sure, your heathen women have their feeling,
Two wives !—'Tis matrimonial fornication :
Pray heav'n avert such customs from this nation !

By such, let Eastern wives be bubbled still ;
Two wives ! for shame ! two husbands if you will.
Aye, this, indeed, might suit a free-born woman,
Besides, our beaus—poor things !—are not like Ammon.
While thus you plead, this inference let me draw,
Nature is love's great universal law.
All feel alike what some disguise with art,
And each wrong'd wife's Roxana in her heart.
If none of you cou'd tamely yield her man,
Then find me guilty, ladies, if you can.

Oxberry's Edition.

THE BUSY BODY,

A COMEDY ;

By Mrs. Centlivre.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

**THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING, WHICH IS FAITHFULLY
MARKED WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS,
AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,**

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

By W. OXBERRY, *Comedian.*

B O S T O N :

**PUBLISHED BY WELLS AND LILLY—COURT-STREET :
AND A. T. GOODRICH & CO.—NEW-YORK.**

1822.

Remarks.

THE BUSY BODY.

THE *Busy Body* is a comedy that has now held possession of the stage above a hundred years, (the best test of excellence :) and the merit that has enabled it to do so consists in the ingenuity of the contrivance, the liveliness of the plot, and the striking effect of the situations. Mrs. Centlivre, in this and her other plays, could do nothing without a stratagem ; but she could do every thing with one. She delights in putting her *dramatis personæ* continually at their wit's end, and in helping them off with a new evasion ; and the subtlety of her resources is in proportion to the criticalness of the situation and the shortness of the notice for resorting to an expedient. Twenty times in seeing or reading one of her plays your pulse beats quick, and you become restless and apprehensive for the event ; but with a fine theatrical sleight of hand, she lets you off, undoes the knot of the difficulty, and you breathe freely again, and have a hearty laugh into the bargain. In short, with her knowledge of chambermaids' tricks, and insight into the intricate foldings of lovers' hearts, she plays with the events of comedy, as a juggler shuffles about a pack of cards, to serve his own purposes, and to

the surprise of the spectator. This is one of the most delightful employments of the dramatic art. It costs nothing—but a voluntary tax on the inventive powers of the author; and it produces when successfully done, profit and praise to one party, and pleasure to all. To shew the extent and importance of theatrical amusements (which some grave persons would decry altogether, and which no one can extol too highly,) a friend of ours, whose name will be as well known to posterity as it is to his contemporaries, was not long ago mentioning that one of the earliest and most memorable impressions ever made on his mind was the seeing *Venice Preserved* acted in a country town when he was only nine years old. But he added that an elderly lady who took him to see it, lamented notwithstanding the wonder and delight he experienced, that instead of *Venice Preserved* they had not gone to see the *Busy Body*, which had been acted the night before. This was fifty years ago, since which, and for fifty years before that, it has been acted a thousand times in town and country, giving delight to the old, the young, and middle-aged, passing the time carelessly, and affording matter for agreeable reflection afterwards, making us think ourselves and wish to be thought, the men equal to Sir George Airy in grace and spirit, the women to Miranda and Isabinda in love and beauty, and all of us superior to Marplot in wit. Among the scenes that might be mentioned in this Comedy as striking instances of happy stage effect, are Miranda's contrivance to escape from Sir George by making him turn his back upon her to hear her confession of love, and the ludicrous attitude in which he is left waiting for the rest of her speech after the lady has vanished; his offer of the hundred pounds to her guardian to make love to her in his presence, and when she receives him in dumb shew, his

answering for both; his situation concealed behind the chimney screen, his supposed metamorphosis into a monkey, and his deliverance from thence, in that character, by the interference of Marplot; Mrs. Patch's sudden conversion of the mysterious love letter into a charm for the tooth-ache, and the whole of Marplot's meddling and blunders. The last character is taken from Dryden and the Duchess of Newcastle; and is indeed the only attempt at character in the play. It is amusing and superficial. We see little of the puzzled perplexity of his brain, but his actions are absurd enough. He whiffles about the stage with considerable volubility, and makes a very lively automaton. Sir George Airy sets out for a scene or two in a spirited manner, but afterwards the character evaporates in the name; and he becomes as common place as his friend Charles, who merely laments over his misfortunes or gets out of them by following the suggestions of his valet or his valet's mistress. Miranda is the heroine of the piece, and has a right to be so; for she is a beauty and an heiress. Her friend has less to recommend her; but who can refuse to fall in love with her name? What volumes of sighs, what a world of love, is breathed in the very sound alone—the letters that form the charming name of Isabinda!

W. H.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation is one hour and forty-seven minutes. The first act occupies the space of sixteen minutes—The second, twenty-four—the third, twenty—the fourth, twenty-four—and the fifth, twenty-three. The half-price commences, generally, at half-past eight o'clock.

Stage Directions.

By R.H. - - - - -	is meant - - - - -	Right Rand.
L.H. - - - - -	- - - - -	Left Hand.
S.E. - - - - -	- - - - -	Second Entrance.
U.E. - - - - -	- - - - -	Upper Entrance.
M.D. - - - - -	- - - - -	Middle Door.
D.F. - - - - -	- - - - -	Door in Flat.
R.H.D. - - - - -	- - - - -	Right Hand Door.
L.H.D. - - - - -	- - - - -	Left Hand Door.

Prologue.

THOUGH modern prophets were expos'd of late,
The author could not prophecy her fate ;
If with such scenes an audience had been fir'd,
The poet must have really been inspir'd.
But these, alas! are melancholy days
For modern prophets and for modern plays :
Yet since prophetic lies please fools o'fashion,
And women are so fond of agitation,
To men of sense I'll prophecy anew ;
And tell you wondrous things that will prove true.
Undaunted col'nels will to camps repair,
Assur'd there'll be no skirmishes this year ;
On our own terms will flow the wish'd-for peace,
All wars, except 'twixt man and wife, will cease ;
The Grand Monarque may wish his son a throne,
But hardly will advance to lose his own.
This season most things bear a smiling face,
But play'rs in summer have a dismal case,
Since your appearance only is our act of grace.
Court ladies will to country seats be gone,
My lord can't all the year live great in town ;
Where, wanting op'ras, basset, and a play,
They'll sigh and stitch a gown to pass the time away :
Gay city wives at Tunbridge will appear,
Whose husbands long have labour'd for an heir,

Where many a courtier may their wants relieve,
But by the waters only they conceive :
The Fleet-street sempstress—toast of Temple sparks,
That runs spruce neckcloths for attorney's clerks.
At Cupid's gardens will her hours regale,
Sing "fair Dorinda," and drink bottled ale !
At all assemblies rakes are up and down,
And gamesters where they think they are not known.

Should I denounce our author's fate to-day,
To cry down prophecies you'd damn the play :
Yet whims like these have sometimes made you laugh ;
'Tis tattling all, like Isaac Bickerstaff.

Since war and places claim the bards that write,
Be kind, and bear a woman's treat to-night ;
Let your indulgence all her fears allay,
And none but women-haters damn this play.

Costume.

SIR GEORGE AIRY.

Superfine brown cloth dress coat trimmed with silver frogs, white waistcoat and breeches, arm hat, and blue great coat.

SIR FRANCIS GRIPE.

Spotted velvet coat and breeches, buff silk waistcoat, cock'd hat, gold loop, and gold headed cane.

CHARLES.

Blue dress coat, white waistcoat, black breeches. Second Dress, Brown Spanish jacket, breeches and cloak of green silk, boots, gauntlets, hat, feathers, &c. Green silk stockings.

SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK.

An old gentleman's suit of crimson, cock'd hat, &c.

MARPLOT.

Green dress coat, gold buttons and frogs, white waistcoat and breeches, arm hat.

WHISPER.

Blue livery frock, one Epaulette, buff waistcoat and breeches, Hat and band.

WAITER.

Modern dress.

4 SERVANTS.

Gay liveries.

MIRANDA.

White satin spencer, muslin skirt, leno veil. Second Dress—Crimson velvet body, white petticoat trimmed with velvet.

ISABINDA.

White muslin dress trimmed with white satin ribbon.

PATCH.

Smart coloured gown, white apron trimmed with ribbon.

SCENTWELL.

Coloured gown.

Persons Represented.

As originally acted, 1709.

<i>Sir George Airy</i>	- - - -	Mr. Wilkes.
<i>Sir Francis Gripe</i>	- - - -	Mr. Eastcourt.
<i>Charles</i>	- - - -	Mr. Mills.
<i>Sir Jealous Traffick</i>	- - - -	Mr. Bullock.
<i>Marplot</i>	- - - -	Mr. Pack.
<i>Whisper</i>	- - - -	Mr. Bullock, jun.

<i>Miranda</i>	- - - -	Mrs. Cross.
<i>Isabinda</i>	- - - -	Mrs. Rogers.
<i>Patch</i>	- - - -	Mrs. Saunders.
<i>Scentwell</i>	- - - -	Mrs. Mills.

1818.
Drury-lane.

<i>Sir George Airy</i>	. . . . .	Mr. Penley.
<i>Sir Francis Gripe</i>	. . . . .	Mr. Dowton.
<i>Charles</i>	. . . . .	Mr. Barnard.
<i>Sir Jealous Traffick</i>	. . . . .	Mr. Gattie.
<i>Marplot</i>	. . . . .	Mr. Harley.
<i>Whisper</i>	. . . . .	Mr. Kent.
<i>Miranda</i>	. . . . .	Mrs. Davison.
<i>Isabinda</i>	. . . . .	Mrs. Orger.
<i>Patch</i>	. . . . .	Mrs. Harlow.
<i>Scentwell</i>	. . . . .	Miss Tidswell.

THE BUSY BODY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Park.*

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, R.H. *meeting* CHARLES, L.H.

Charles. Ha ! sir George Airy a birding thus early ! What forbidden game rous'd you so soon ? for no lawful occasion could invite a person of your figure abroad at such unfashionable hours.

Sir G. There are some men, Charles, whom fortune has left free from inquietudes, who are diligently studious to find out ways and means to make themselves uneasy.

Charles. Is it possible that any thing in nature can ruffle the temper of a man whom the four seasons of the year compliment with as many thousand pounds ; nay, and a father at rest with his ancestors ?

Sir G. Why, there it is now ! a man that wants money thinks none can be unhappy that has it ; but my affairs are in such a whimsical posture, that it will require a calculation of my nativity to find if my gold will relieve me or not.

Charles. Ha, ha, ha! never consult the stars about that; gold has a power beyond them. Then what can thy business be that gold won't serve thee in?

Sir G. Why I'm in love.

Charles. In love!—Ha, ha, ha, ha! in love!—Ha, ha, ha, ha! with what, pr'ythee? a cherubin?

Sir G. No; with a woman.

Charles. A woman! good. Ha, ha, ha, ha! and gold not help thee?

Sir G. But suppose I'm in love with two——

Charles. Ay, if thou'rt in love with two hundred, gold will fetch 'em, I warrant thee, boy. But who are they? who are they? come.

Sir G. One is a lady whose face I never saw, but witty to a miracle; the other beautiful as Venus——

Charles. And a fool——

Sir G. For aught I know, for I never spoke to her; but you can inform me. I am charm'd by the wit of the one, and die for the beauty of the other.

Charles. And pray which are you in quest of now?

Sir G. I prefer the sensual pleasure; I'm for her I've seen, who is thy father's ward, Miranda.

Charles. Nay, then I pity you; for the Jew, my father, will no more part with her and thirty thousand pounds than he would with a guinea to keep me from starving.

Sir G. Now you see gold can't do every thing, Charles.

Charles. Yes; for 'tis her gold that bars my father's gate against you.

Sir G. Why, if he be this avaricious wretch, how cam'st thou by such a liberal education?

Charles. Not a souse out of his pocket, I assure you: I had an uncle who defray'd that charge! but for some little wildness of youth, though he made me his heir, left dad my guardian till I came to years of discretion, which I presume the old gentleman will never think I am; and now he has got the estate into his clutches, it does me no more good than if it lay in Prester John's dominions.

Sir G. What, canst thou find no stratagem to redeem it?

Charles. I have made many essays to no purpose; though want, the mistress of invention, still tempts me on, yet still the old fox is too cunning for me.—I am upon my last project, which if it fails, then for my last refuge, a brown musket.

Sir G. What is't? can I assist thee?

Charles. Not yet; when you can, I have confidence enough in you to ask it.

Sir G. I am always ready. But what does he intend to do with Miranda? Is she to be sold in private, or will he put her up by way of auction, at who bids most? if so, 'egad I'm for him; my gold, as you say, shall be subservient to my pleasure.

Charles. To deal ingenuously with you, sir George, I know very little of her or home; for since my uncle's death, and my return from travel, I have never been well with my father; he thinks my expenses too great, and I his

allowance too little ; he never sees me but he quarrels, and to avoid that I shun his house as much as possible. The report is he intends to marry her himself.

Sir G. Can she consent to it ?

Charles. Yes faith, so they say : but I tell you I am wholly ignorant of the matter. I fancy she plays the mother-in-law already, and sets the old gentleman on to do mischief.

Sir G. Then I have your free consent to get her ?

Charles. Ay, and my helping hand, if occasion be.

Sir G. Poh ! yonder's a fool coming this way ; let's avoid him.

Charles. What, Marplot ? No, no, he's my instrument ; there's a thousand conveniences in him ; he'll lend me his money, when he has any, run of my errands and be proud on it ; in short he'll pimp for me, lie for me, drink for me, do any thing but fight for me ; and that I trust to my own arm for.

Sir G. Nay, then he's to be endured ; I never knew his qualifications before. *(Turns up the stage.)*

Enter MARLPLOT, L.H. with a Patch across his Face.

Mar. Dear Charles, your's—Ha ! sir George Airy ! the man in the world I have an ambition to be known to ! *(Aside.)* Give me thy hand dear boy. *(To Charles.)*

Charles. A good assurance ! But harkye, how came your beautiful countenance clouded in the wrong place ?

Mar. I must confess 'tis a little mal-a-propos ; but no matter for that. A word with you, Charles. Pr'ythee introduce me to sir George—he is a man of wit, and I'd give ten guineas to—

Charles. When you have 'em you mean.

Mar. Ay, when I have 'em ; pugh, plague, you cut the thread of my discourse—I would give ten guineas, I say to be rank'd in his acquaintance. But, prythee, introduce me.

Charles. Well, on condition you'll give us a true account how you came by that mourning nose, I will.

Mar. I'll do it.

Charles. Sir George, here's a gentleman has a passionate desire to kiss your hand.

Sir G. (Advancing.) Oh ! I honour men of the sword ! and I presume this gentleman is lately come from Spain or Portugal—by his scars.

Mar. (Crosses to centre.) No really, sir George, mine sprung from civil fury. Happening last night into the groom porter's—I had a strong inclination to go ten guineas with a sort of a, sort of a—kind of a milksop, as I thought. A plague of the dice ! he flung out, and my pockets being empty, as Charles knows they often are, he proved a surly North Briton, and broke my face for my deficiency.

Sir G. Ha, ha ! and did not you draw ?

Mar. Draw, sir ! why I did but lay my hand upon my sword to make a swift retreat, and he roared out, Now the deel a ma sal, sir, gin ye

touch yer steel Ise whip mine through yer wem. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha!

Charles. Ha, ha, ha, ha! Safe was the word. So you walk'd off, I suppose.

Mar. Yes, for I avoid fighting, purely to be serviceable to my friends, you know—

Sir G. Your friends are much obliged to you, sir: I hope you'll rank me in that number.

Mar. Sir George, a bow from the side-box, or to be seen in your chariot, binds me ever your's.

Sir G. Trifles; you may command 'em when you please.

Charles. Provided he may command you.

Mar. Me! why I live for no other purpose—(*Crosses to centre.*)—Sir George, I have the honour to be carressed by most of the reigning toasts of the town: I'll tell 'em you are the finest gentleman—

Sir G. No, no, pr'ythee let me alone to tell the ladies—my parts—Can you convey a letter upon occasion, or deliver a message with an air of business, ha?

Mar. With the assurance of a page and the gravity of a statesman.

Sir G. You know Miranda?

Mar. What! my sister ward? why, her guardian is mine; we are fellow sufferers. Ah, he is a covetous, cheating, sanctified curmudgeon: that sir Francis Gripe is a damn'd old—hypo-critical—

Charles. Hold, hold; I suppose, friend, you forget that he is my father.

Mar. I ask your pardon, Charles, but it is for your sake I hate him. Well, I say, the world is mistaken in him; his outside piety makes him every man's executor, and his inside cunning makes him every heir's gaoler. 'Egad, Charles, I'm half persuaded that thou'rt some ward too, and never of his getting—for never were too things so unlike as you and your father; he scrapes up every thing, and thou spend'st every thing; every body is indebted to him, and thou art indebted to every body.

Charles. You are very free, Mr. Marplot.

Mar. Ay, I give and take, Charles—you may be as free with me, you know.

Sir G. A pleasant fellow.

Charles. The dog is diverting sometimes, or there would be no enduring his impertinence. He is pressing to be employed, and willing to execute; but some ill fate generally attends all he undertakes, and he oftener spoils an intrigue than helps it.

Mar. I have always your good word, but if I miscarry 'tis none of my fault; I follow my instructions.

Charles. Yes, witness the merchant's wife.

Mar. Pish, poh! that was an accident.

Sir G. What was it, pr'ythee?

Mar. Nay, Charles, now don't expose your friend.

Charles. Why, you must know I had lent a certain merchant my hunting horses, and was to have met his wife in his absence. Sending him along with my groom to make the compliment,

and to deliver a letter to the lady at the same time, what does he do but gives the husband the letter and offers her the horses.

Mar. Why, to be sure I did offer her the horses, and I remember you was even with me, for you denied the letter to be yours, and swore I had a design upon her, which my bones paid for.

Charles. (*Crosses to R.H.*) Come, sir George, let's walk round if you are not engaged, for I have sent my man upon a little earnest business, and I have ordered him to bring me the answer into the Park.

Mar. Business! and I not know it! 'Egad I'll watch him. (*Aside.*)

Sir G. I must beg your pardon, Charles, I am to meet your father.

Charles. My father!

Sir G. Ay, and about the oddest bargain perhaps you ever heard of; but I'll not impart till I know the success.

Mar. What can his business be with sir Francis! Now would I give all the world to know it. Why the devil should not one know every man's concerns! (*Aside.*)

Charles. Prosperity to't, whate'er it be: I have private affairs too: over a bottle we'll compare notes.

Mar. Charles knows I love a glass as well as any man; I'll make one; shall it be to-night? I long to know their secrets. (*Aside.*)

Enter WHISPER, R.H.

Whis. Sir, sir, Mrs. Patch says Isabinda's Spanish father has quite spoiled the plot, and she can't meet you in the Park, but he infallibly will go out this afternoon, she says; but I must step again to know the hour.

Mar. What did Whisper say now? I shall go stark mad if I'm not let into the secret. (*Aside.*)

Charles. Curst misfortune!

Mar. Curst! what's curst, Charles?

Charles. Come along with me, my heart feels pleasure at her name. Sir George, yours; we'll meet at the old place, the usual hour.

Sir G. (*Crosses to L.H.*) Agreed, I think I see sir Francis yonder. [*Exit L.H.*]

Charles. Marplot, you must excuse me; I am engag'd. [*Exit R.H.*]

Mar. Engag'd! 'Egad, I'll engage my life I'll know what your engagement is. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Enter MIRANDA, R.H.U.E.

Mir. Let the chair wait. My servant that dogg'd sir George said he was in the Park.

Enter PATCH, R.H.

Ha! miss Patch alone! did not you tell me you had contrived a way to bring Isabinda to the Park?

Patch. Oh, madam, your ladyship can't imagine what a wretched disappointment we have

met with! Just as I had fetch'd a suit of my clothes for a disguise, comes my old master into his closet, which is right against her chamber door: this struck us into a terrible fright—at length I put on a grave face, and asked him if he was at leisure for his chocolate? in hopes to draw him out of his hole; but he snapp'd my nose off: “No, I shall be busy here these two hours.” At which my poor mistress, seeing no way of escape, ordered me to wait on your ladyship with the sad relation.

Mir. Unhappy Isabinda! was ever any thing so unaccountable as the humour of sir Jealous Traffick?

Patch. Oh, madam, it's his living so long in Spain; he vows he'll spend half his estate but he'll be a parliament man, on purpose to bring in a bill for women to wear veils, and other odious Spanish customs—He swears it is the height of impudence to have a woman seen bare-faced even at church, and scarce believes there's a true begotten child in the city.

Mir. Ha, ha, ha! how the old fool torments himself! Suppose he could introduce his rigid rules—does he think we could not match them in contrivance? No, no; let the tyrant man make what laws he will, if there's a woman under the government, I warrant she finds a way to break 'em. Is his mind set upon the Spaniard for his son-in-law, still?

Patch. Ay, and he expects him by the next fleet, which drives his daughter to melancholy and despair. But madam, I find you retain the

same gay, cheerful spirit you had when I waited on your ladyship—My lady is mighty good-humoured too, and I have found a way to make sir Jealous believe I am wholly in his interest, when my real design is to serve her: he makes me her gaoler, and I set her at liberty.

Mir. I knew thy prolific brain would be of singular service to her, or I had not parted with thee to her father.

Patch. But, madam, the report is that you are going to marry your guardian.

Mir. It is necessary such a report should be, Patch.

Patch. But is it true, madam?

Mir. That's not absolutely necessary.

Patch. I thought it was only the old strain, coaxing him still for your own, and railing at all the young fellows about town: in my mind now you are as ill plagu'd with your guardian, madam, as my lady is with her father.

Mir. No, I have liberty wench; that she wants: what would she give now to be in this dishabille in the open air, nay more, in pursuit of the young fellow she likes? for that's my case, I assure you.

Patch. As for that, madam, she's even with you; for though she can't come abroad, we have a way to bring him home in spite of old Argus.

Mir. Now, Patch, your opinion of my choice, for here he comes—Ha! my guardian with him! what can be the meaning of this? I'm sure sir

Francis can't know me in this dress.—Let's observe 'em.
(*They withdraw.*)

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE *and* SIR GEORGE
AIRY, L.H.

Sir F. Verily, sir George, thou wilt repent throwing away thy money so, for I tell thee sincerely, Miranda, my charge, does not like a young fellow; they are all vicious, and seldom make good husbands: in sober sadness she cannot abide 'em.

Mir. (Peeping.) In sober sadness you are mistaken—What can this mean?

Sir G. Lookye, sir Francis, whether she can or cannot abide young fellows is not the business: will you take the fifty guineas?

Sir F. In good truth I will not—for I knew thy father, he was a hearty wary man, and I cannot consent that his son should squander away what he saved to no purpose.

Mir. (Peeping.) Now, in the name of wonder, what bargain can he be driving about me for fifty guineas?

Sir G. Well, sir Francis, since you are so conscientious for my father's sake, then permit me the favour gratis.

Sir F. No verily; if thou dost not buy thy experience thou wilt never be wise; therefore give me a hundred and try thy fortune.

Sir G. The scruples arose, I find, from the scanty sum—Let me see—a hundred guineas—
(*Takes the Money out of a Purse and chinks it.*)

Ha! they have a very pretty sound, and a very pleasing look—But then, Miranda—but if she should be cruel—

Sir F. Ay, do consider on't. He, he, he!

Sir G. No, I'll do't. Come, to the point; here's the gold; sum up the conditions.—

(Sir Francis pulls out a Paper.)

Mir. (Peeping.) Ay, for heaven's sake do, for my expectation is on the rack.

Sir F. Well, at your peril be it.

Sir G. Ay, ay, go on.

Sir F. Imprimis, you are to be admitted into my house in order to move your suit to Miranda, for the space of ten minutes, without let or molestation, provided I remain in the same room

Sir G. But out of ear-shot.

Sir F. Well, well, I don't desire to hear what you say; ha, ha, ha! in consideration I am to have that purse and a hundred guineas.

Sir G. Take it. *(Gives him the Purse.)* And this agreement is to be performed to-day.

Sir F. Ay, ay; the sooner the better. Poor fool! how Miranda and I shall laugh at him! *(Aside.)*—well sir George, ha ha, ha! take the last sound of your guineas, ha, ha, ha!

[Chinks them.—Exit, R.H.]

Mir. (Peeping.) Sure he does not know I am Miranda.

Sir G. A very extraordinary bargain I have made, truly; if she should be really in love with this old cuff now—Pshaw! that's morally impossible.—But then, what hopes have I to succeed? I never spoke to her—

Mir. (*Peeping.*) Say you so? then I am safe.

Sir G. What though my tongue never spoke, my eyes said a thousand things, and my hopes flattered me her's answer'd 'em. If I'm lucky—if not, it is but a hundred guineas thrown away. (*Mir. comes forward, R.H.*)

Mir. Upon what, sir George?

Sir G. Ha! my incognita—upon a woman, madam.

Mir. They are the worst things you can deal in, and damage the soonest; your very breath destroys 'em, and I fear you'll never see your return, sir George, ha, ha!

Sir G. Were they more brittle than china, and dropped to pieces with a touch, every atom as her I have ventur'd at, if she is but mistress of thy wit, balances ten times the sum.—Pr'ythee, let me see thy face.

Mir. By no means; that may spoil your opinion of my sense—

Sir G. Rather confirm it, madam.

Patch. (*L.H.*) So rob the lady of your gallantry, sir.

Sir G. No child, a dish of chocolate in the morning never spoils my dinner: the other lady I design for a set meal; so there's no danger.—

Mir. Matrimony! ha, ha, ha! what crimes have you committed against the god of love, that he should revenge 'em so severely, as to stamp husband on your forehead?

Sir G. For my folly in having so often met you here without pursuing the laws of nature

and exercising her command; (*Patch crosses behind to R.H.*) but I resolve ere we part now to know who you are, where you live, what kind of flesh and blood your face is; therefore unmask, and don't put me to the trouble of doing it for you.

Mir. My face is the same flesh and blood with my hand, sir George; which if you'll be so rude to provoke—

Sir G. You'll apply it to my cheek—the ladies' favours are always welcome, but I must have that cloud withdrawn. (*Taking hold of her.*) Remember you are in the Park, child; and what a terrible thing would it be to lose this pretty white hand!

Mir. And how it will sound in a chocolate-house, that sir George Airy rudely pulled off a lady's mask, when he had given her his honour that he never would directly or indirectly, endeavour to know her till she gave him leave?

Sir G. But if that lady thinks fit to pursue and meet me at every turn, like some troubled spirit, shall I be blamed if I inquire into the reality? I would have nothing dissatisfied in a female shape.

Mir. What shall I do? (*Pauses.*)

Sir G. Ay, pr'ythee, consider, for thou shalt find me very much at thy service.

Patch. Suppose, sir, the lady should be in love with you.

Sir G. Oh! I'll return the obligation in a moment.

Patch. And marry her?

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! that's not the way to love her, child.

Mir. If he discovers me I shall die——Which way shall I escape?—let me see. (*Pauses.*)

Sir G. Well, madam—

Mir. I have it—Sir George, 'tis fit you should allow something; if you'll excuse my face, and turn your back (if you look upon me I shall sink, even masked as I am,) I will confess why I have engaged you so often, who I am, and where I live.

Sir G. Well to show you I am a man of honour, I accept the conditions: let me but once know those, and the face wont be long a secret to me.

Patch. What mean you, madam?

(*Aside to Mir.*)

Mir. To get off.

(*Aside to Patch.*)

Sir G. 'Tis something indecent to turn one's back upon a lady; but you command, and I obey. (*Turns his back*) Come, madam, begin—

Mir. First, then, it was my unhappy lot to see you at Paris (*Draws back a little way, and speaks,*) at a ball upon a birth-day; your shape and air charm'd my eyes, your wit and complaisance my soul, and from that fatal night I lov'd you.

(*Drawing back.*)

And when you left the place, grief seiz'd me
so, [know;

Nor rest my heart nor sleep my eyes could
Last I resolv'd a hazardous point to try,
And quit the place in search of liberty.

[*Exit, R.H. followed by Patch.*]

Sir G. Excellent—I hope she's handsome—
Well now, madam, to the two other things, your
name, and where you live—I am a gentleman,
and this confession will not be lost upon me—
Nay, pr'ythee, don't weep, but go on, for I find
my heart melts in thy behalf—Speak quickly,
or I shall turn about—Not yet —Poor lady! she
expects I should comfort her, and to do her jus-
tice, she has said enough to encourage me.
(*Turns about.*) Ha! gone! the devil! jilted!
Why, what a tale she has invented—of Paris,
balls, and birth days!—'Egad, I'd give ten gui-
neas to know who the gipsy is—A curse of my
folly—I deserve to lose her. What woman
can forgive a man that turns his back!

The bold and resolute in love and war
To conquer take the right and swiftest way:
The boldest lover soonest gains the fair,
As courage makes the rudest force obey:
Take no denial, and the dames adore ye;
Closely pursue them, and they fall before ye.
[*Exit, L.H.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in SIR FRANCIS GRIPE'S House.*

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and MIRANDA, L.H.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha!

Mir. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Oh! I shall die with laughing,—the most romantic adventure—Ha, ha, ha! what does the odious young fop mean? A hundred pieces to talk ten minutes with me! ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir F. And I am to be by too, there's the jest; adad, if it had been in private I should not have car'd to trust the young dog.

Mir. Indeed and indeed but you might, Gardy—Now methinks there's nobody handsomer than you: so neat, so clean, so good-humoured, and so loving—

Sir F. Pretty rogue, pretty rogue! and so thou shalt find me, if thou dost prefer thy Gardy before these caperers of the age: thou shalt outshine the queen's box on an opera night; thou shalt be the envy of the ring (for I will carry thee to Hyde-park,) and thy equipage shall surpass the—what d'ye call 'em ambassador's.

Mir. Nay, I am sure the discreet part of my sex will envy me more for the inside furniture, when you are in it, than my outside equipage.

Sir F. A cunning baggage, i'faith thou art,

and a wise one too ! and to show thee that thou hast not chose amiss, I'll this moment disinherit my son, and settle my whole estate upon thee.

Mir. There's an old rogue now. (*Aside.*) No Gardy, I would not have your name be so black in the world—You know my father's will runs that I am not to possess my estate, without your consent, till I am five-and-twenty ; you shall only abate the odd seven years, and make me mistress of my estate to-day, and I'll make you master of my person to-morrow.

Sir F. Humph ! that may not be safe—No, Chargy, I'll settle it upon thee for pin-money, and that will be every bit as well, thou know'st.

Mir. Unconscionable old wretch ! bribe me with my own money !—Which way shall I get out of his hands ? (*Aside.*)

Sir F. Well, what art thou thinking on, my girl, ha ? how to banter sir George ?

Mir. I must not pretend to banter ; he knows my tongue too well. (*Aside.*) No, Gardy, I have thought of a way will confound him more than all I could say, if I could talk to him seven years.

Sir F. How's that ? oh ! I'm transported, I'm ravish'd, I'm mad—

Mir. It would make you mad if you knew all. (*Aside.*) I'll not answer him a word, but be dumb to all he says.

Sir F. Dumb ! good ; ha, ha, ha ! Excellent ! ha, ha, ha, ha ! I think I have you now, sir George. Dumb ! he'll go distracted—well, she's the wittiest rogue.—Ha, ha, dumb ! I can't but laugh, ha, ha ! to think how damn'd mad

he'll be when he finds he has given his money away for a dumb show ! ha, ha, ha !

Mir. Nay, Gardy, if he did but know my thoughts of him it would make him ten times madder ; ha, ha, ha, ha !

Sir F. Ay, so it would, Chargy, to hold him in such derision, to scorn to answer him, to be dumb ; ha, ha, ha !

Enter CHARLES, L.H.

Sir F. How now, sirrah ! who let you in ?

Charles. My necessities, sir.

Sir F. Your necessities are very impertinent, and ought to have sent before they enter'd.

Charles. Sir, I knew 'twas a word would gain admittance no where.

Sir F. Then, sirrah, how durst you rudely thrust that upon your father, which nobody else would admit ?

Charles. Sure the name of a son is a sufficient plea ; I ask this lady's pardon, if I have intruded.

Sir F. Ay, ay, ask her pardon and her blessing too, if you expect any thing from me.

Mir. I believe your's, sir Francis, and a purse of guineas, would be more material. Your son may have business with you ; I'll retire.

Sir F. I guess his business, but I'll despatch him ; I expect the knight every minute : you'll be in readiness ?

Mir. Certainly. My expectation is more upon the wing than yours, old gentleman.

[Aside, and Exit, R.H.]

Sir F. Well, sir.

Charles. Nay, it is very ill, sir; my circumstances are, I'm sure.

Sir F. And what's that to me, sir? your management should have made 'em better.

Charles. If you please to intrust me with the management of my estate I shall endeavour it, sir.

Sir F. What, to set upon a card, and buy a lady's favour at the price of a thousand pieces, to rig out an equipage for a wench, or by your carelessness to enrich your steward to fine for sheriff, or put up for a parliament man?

Charles. I hope I should not spend it this way: however I ask only for what my uncle left me; yours you may dispose of as you please, sir.

Sir F. That I shall, out of your reach, I assure you, sir. Adad, these young fellows think old men get estates for nothing but them to squander away in dicing, wenching, drinking, dressing, and so forth.

Charles. I think I was born a gentleman, sir; I'm sure my uncle bred me like one.

Sir F. From which you would infer, sir, that gaming and wenching are requisites for a gentleman.

Charles. Monstrous! when I should ask him only for a support he falls into these unmannerly reproaches. I must though against my will, employ invention, and by stratagem relieve myself. *(Aside.)*

Sir F. Sirrah, what is it you mutter, sirrah,

ha? (*Holds up his Cane.*) I say you shan't have a groat out of my hands till I please—and may be I'll never please; and what's that to you?

Charles. Nay, to be robb'd or have one's throat cut is not much— (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Sir F. What's that, sirrah? would you rob me or cut my throat, you rogue?

Charles. Heaven forbid, sir!—I said no such thing.

Sir F. Mercy on me! what a plague it is to have a son of one-and twenty, who wants to elbow one out of one's life to edge himself into the estate!

Enter MARPLOT, L.H.

Mar. 'Egad he's here—I was afraid I had lost him: his secret could not be with his father; his wants are public there.—Guardian, your servant—O Charles, are you there? I know by that sorrowful countenance of thine, the old man's fist is as close as his strong box—But I'll help thee. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. So! here's another extravagant coxcomb that will spend his fortune before he comes to't, but he shall pay swinging interest, and so let the fool go on.—Well, what does necessity bring you too, sir?

Mar. You have hit it, Guardian—(*Crosses to centre.*) I want a hundred pounds.

Sir F. For what?

Mar. Pugh! for a hundred things; I can't for my life tell you for what.

Charles. Sir, I suppose I have received all the answer I am like to have?

Mar. Oh, the devil! if he gets out before me I shall lose him again. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. Ay, sir, and you may be marching as soon as you please—I must see a change in your temper, ere you find one in mine.

Mar. Pray, sir, dispatch me; the money, sir; I'm in mighty haste.

Sir F. Fool, take this and go to the cashier. I shan't be long plagu'd with thee.

(*Gives him a note.*)

Mar. Devil take the cashier! (*Crosses to R.H.*) I shall certainly have Charles gone before I come back. [*Exit, R.H. running.*]

Charles. Well, sir, I take my leave—but remember you expose an only son to all the miseries of wretched poverty, which too often lays the plan for scenes of mischief.

Sir F. Stay, Charles I have a sudden thought come into my head which may prove to thy advantage.

Charles. Ha! does he relent?

Sir F. My lady Wrinkle, worth forty thousand pounds, sets up for a handsome young husband; she prais'd thee t'other day; though the match-makers can get twenty guineas for a sight of her, I can introduce thee for nothing.

Charles. My lady Wrinkle, sir! why, she has but one eye.

Sir F. Then she'll see but half your extravagance, sir.

Charles. Condemn me to such a piece of de-

formity ! a toothless, dirty, wry-neck'd, hunch-back'd hag !

Sir F. Hunch-back'd ! so much the better ! then she has a rest for her misfortunes, for thou wilt load her swingingly. Now, I warrant, you think this is no offer of a father ; forty thousand pounds is nothing with you.

Charles. Yes, sir, I think it too much ; a young beautiful woman with half the money would be more agreeable.—I thank you, sir ; but you choose better for yourself, I find.

Sir F. Out of my doors, you dog ! you pretend to meddle with my marriage, sirrah !

Charles. Sir, I obey you, but—

Sir F. But me no buts—be gone, sir ! dare to ask me for money again—refuse forty thousand pounds ! Out of my doors, I say, without reply.
[*Exit Charles, L.H.*

Enter MARPLOT, R.H. running.

Mar. Ha ! gone ! is Charles gone, Gardy ?

Sir F. Yes, and I desire your wise worship to walk after him.

Mar. Nay, 'egad I shall run, I tell you that. A plague of the cashier for detaining me so long ! Where the devil shall I find him now ? I shall certainly lose this secret, and I had rather by half lose my money—Where shall I find him now—D'ye know where Charles is gone, Gardy ?

Sir F. Gone to the devil, and you may go after him.

Mar. Ay, that I will as fast as I can. (*Going returns.*) Have you any commands there, Gardy? [*Exit, L.H.*]

Sir F. What, is the fellow distracted?

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Servant. Sir George Airy inquires for you, sir.

Sir F. Desire sir George to walk up.—[*Exit Servant, L.H.*] Now for a trial of skill that will make me happy and him a fool. Ha, ha, ha! In my mind he looks like an ass already.

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, L.H.

Well, sir George, do you hold in the same mind, or would you capitulate? ha, ha, ha! Look, here are the guineas; (*Chinks them.*) ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. Not if they were twice the sum, sir Francis; therefore be brief, call in the lady, and take your post.

Sir F. Agreed. Miranda! [*Exit, R.H.*]

Sir G. If she's a woman, and not seduc'd by witchcraft, to this old rogue, I'll make his heart ache; for if she has but one grain of inclination about her, I'll vary a thousand shapes but find it.

Re-enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and MIRANDA, R.H.

Sir G. So from the eastern chambers breaks the sun, Dispels the clouds, and gilds the vales below. (*Salutes her.*)

Sir F. Hold, sir ; kissing was not in our agreement.

Sir G. Oh ! that's by way of prologue. Pr'ythee, old Mammon, to thy post.

Sir F. (*Takes out his watch.*) Well, young Timon, 'tis now four exactly ; ten minutes, remember, is your utmost limit ; not a minute more.

(*Retires to the Bottom of the Stage.*)

Sir G. Madam, whether you'll excuse or blame my love, the author of this rash proceeding depends upon your pleasure, as also the life of your admirer ; your sparkling eyes speak a heart susceptible of love, your vivacity a soul too delicate to admit the embraces of decayed mortality. Shake off this tyrant guardian's yoke ; assume yourself, and dash his bold, aspiring hopes. The deity of his desires is avarice, a heretic in love, and ought to be banished by the queen of beauty. (*Kneels.*) See, madam, a faithful servant kneels, and begs to be admitted in the number of your slaves.

(*Miranda gives him her Hand to raise him.*)

Sir F. (*Running up.*) Hold, hold, hold ! no palming ; that's contrary to articles—

Sir G. 'Sdeath, sir, keep your distance, or I'll write another article in your guts.

(*Lays his Hand to his Sword.*)

Sir F. (*Going back.*) A bloody minded fellow !

Sir G. Not answer me ! perhaps she thinks my address too grave : I'll be more free. (*Aside.*) Can you be so unconscionable, madam, to let me say all these fine things to you without one single compliment in return ?

Sir F. (*Running up with his Watch in his hand.*) There's five of the ten minutes gone, sir George—Adad, I don't like those close conferences—

Sir G. More interruptions—you will have it, sir! (*Lays his Hand to his Sword.*)

Sir F. (*Going back.*) No, no; you shan't have her neither. (*Aside.*)

Sir G. Dumb still—sure this old dog has enjoin'd her silence. I'll try another way. (*Aside.*) Madam these few minutes cost me an hundred pounds—and would you answer me, I could purchase the whole day so. However, madam, you must give me leave to make the best interpretation I can for my money, and take the indication of your silence for the secret liking of my person; therefore, madam, I will instruct you how to keep your word inviolate to sir Francis, and yet answer me to every question: as for example, when I ask any thing to which you would reply in the affirmative, gently nod your head thus, (*Nods.*) and when in the negative, thus, (*Shakes his head.*) and in the doubtful, a tender sigh thus. (*Sighs.*)

Mir. How every action charms me—but I'll fit him for signs, I warrant him. (*Aside.*)

Sir G. Was it by his desire that you are dumb, madam, to all I can say? (*Miranda nods.*) Very well, she's tractable, I find! (*Aside.*) And is it possible that you can love him? (*Miranda nods.*) Miraculous! Pardon the bluntness of my questions, for my time is short. May I not hope to supplant him in your esteem? (*Miranda sighs.*) Good! she answers me as I could wish. (*Aside.*)

You'll not consent to marry him then ? (*Miranda sighs.*) How ! doubtful in that ?—Undone again—bump ! but that may proceed from his power to keep her out of her estate 'till twenty-five : I'll try that. (*Aside.*) Come, madam, I cannot think you hesitate in this affair out of any motive but your fortune—let him keep it till those few years are expired ; make me happy with your person, let him enjoy your wealth. (*Miranda holds up her Hands.*) Why, what sign is that now ? Nay, nay, madam, except you observe my lesson I can't understand your meaning.

Sir F. What a vengeance ! are they talking by signs ? 'Ad, I may be fool'd here. (*Aside.*) What do you mean, sir George ?

Sir G. To cut your throat, if you dare mutter another syllable.

Sir F. 'Od, I wish he were fairly out of my house. (*Aside.*)

Sir G. Pray, madam, will you answer me to the purpose ? (*Miranda shakes her Head, and points to Sir Francis.*) What does she mean ? She won't answer me to the purpose, or is she afraid you' old cuff should understand her signs ?—ay, it must be that. (*Aside.*) I perceive, madam, you are too apprehensive of the promise you have made to follow my rules, therefore I'll suppose your mind, and answer for you.—First for myself, madam ; “ that I am in love with you is an infallible truth.” Now for you. (*Turns on her side.*) “ Indeed, sir ! and may I believe it ? ”—“ As certainly, madam, as that 'tis daylight, or that I die if you persist in silence.”

—“Bless me with the music of your voice, and raise my spirits to their proper heaven. (*Kneels.*) Thus low let me entreat ere I’m obliged to quit this place ; grant me some token of a favourable reception to keep my hopes alive.” (*Arises hastily, and turns on her side.*) “Rise, sir, and since my guardian’s presence will not allow me privilege of tongue, read that, and rest assur’d you are not indifferent to me.” (*Offers her a letter, she strikes it down.*) Ha, right woman ! but no matter : I’ll go on.

Sir F. Ha ! what’s that ? a letter !—Ha, ha, ha ! thou art balk’d.

Sir G. Ha ! a letter ! oh ! let me kiss it with the same raptures that I would do the dear hand that touch’d it. (*Opens it.*) Now for a quick fancy, and a long extempore. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. (*Coming up hastily.*) The time is expired, sir, and you must take your leave. There, my girl, there’s the hundred pounds which thou hast won. Go ; I’ll be with you presently ; ha, ha, ha, ha !

[*Exit Miranda, R.H.*]

Sir G. Adsheart, madam, you won’t leave me just in the nick, will you ?

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha ! she has nick’d you, sir George, I think ! ha, ha, ha ! Have you any more hundred pounds to throw away upon courtship ? ha, ha, ha !

Sir G. He, he, he, he ! A curse of your flattering jests !—Yet, however ill I have succeeded, I’ll venture the same wager she does not value thee a spoonful of snuff—nay more, though you

enjoin'd her silence to me, you'll never make her speak to the purpose with yourself.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha ! Did I not tell thee thou would'st repent thy money ? Did I not say she hated young fellows ? ha, ha, ha !

Sir G. And I'm positive she's not in love with age.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha ! no matter for that, ha, ha ! She's not taken with your youth, nor your rhetoric to boot ; ha, ha !

Sir G. Whate'er her reasons are for disliking of me, I am certain she can be taken with nothing about thee.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha ! how he swells with envy—Poor man ! poor man ! ha, ha, ha ! I must beg your pardon, sir George ; Miranda will be impatient to have her share of mirth. Verily we shall laugh at thee most egregiously ; ha, ha, ha !

Sir G. With all my heart, faith—I shall laugh in my turn too—for if you dare marry her, old Belzebub, you will be cuckolded most egregiously : remember that, and tremble.

[*Exeunt, Sir G. L.H. Sir F. R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Sir Jealous Traffick's House.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, ISABINDA, and PATCH, L.H.

Sir J. What, in the balcony again, notwithstanding my positive commands to the contrary ?—Why don't you write a bill on your forehead to show passengers there's something to be let ?

Isa. What harm can there be in a little fresh air, sir?

Sir J. Is your constitution so hot, mistress, that it wants cooling, ha? Apply the virtuous Spanish rules; banish your taste and thoughts of flesh, feed upon roots, and quench your thirst with water.

Isa. That, and a close room, would certainly make me die of the vapours.

Sir J. No, mistress, 'tis your high-fed, lusty, rambling, rampant ladies—that are troubled with the vapours: 'tis your ratafia, persico, cinnamon, citron, and spirit of clara, cause such swimming in the brain, that carries many a guinea full tide to the doctor: but you are not to be bred this way: no galloping abroad, no receiving visits at home, for in our loose country the women are as dangerous as the men.

Patch. So I told her, sir, and that it was not decent to be seen in a balcony—but she threatened to slap my chops, and told me I was her servant, not her governess.

Sir J. Did she so? but I'll make her to know that you are her duenna. Oh, that incomparable custom of Spain! Why, here's no depending upon old women in my country—for they are as wanton at eighty as a girl of eighteen; and a man may as safely trust to Asgil's translation, as to his great grandmother's not marrying again.

Isa. Or to the Spanish ladies' veils and duennas for the safeguard of their honour.

Sir J. Dare to ridicule the cautious conduct

of that wise nation, and I'll have you lock'd up this fortnight, without a peep-hole.

Isa. If we had but the ghostly helps in England which they have in Spain, I might deceive you if you did—Let me tell you, sir, confinement sharpens the invention, as want of sight strengthens the other senses, and is often more pernicious than the recreation that innocent liberty allows.

Sir J. Say you so, mistress ! who the devil taught you the art of reasoning ? I assure you they must have a greater faith than I pretend to, that can think any woman innocent who requires liberty ; therefore, Patch, to your charge I give her ; lock her up till I come back from 'Change. I shall have some sauntering coxcomb with nothing but a red coat and a feather, think by leaping into her arms to leap into my estate—but I'll prevent them ; she shall be only signior Babinetto's.

Patch. Really, sir, I wish you would employ any body else in this affair ; I lead a life like a dog in obeying your commands. Come, madam, will you be locked up ?

Isa. Ay, to enjoy more freedom than he is aware of. [*Aside.—Exit with Patch, L.H.*]

Sir J. I believe this wench is very true to my interest : I am happy I met with her, if I can but keep my daughter from being blown upon till signior Babinetto arrives, who shall marry her as soon as he comes, and carry her to Spain as soon as he has married her. She has a pregnant wit, and I'd no more have her an English wife than the grand signior's mistress. [*Exit, R.H.*]

SCENE III.—*Outside of Sir Jealous Traffick's House.*

(*Sir J. comes from his house, looks about—then Exit, R.H.*)

Enter WHISPER, R.H.U.E.

Whis. So, there goes sir Jealous : where shall I find Mrs. Patch, now ?

Enter PATCH, L.H.D.

Patch. Oh, Mr. Whisper ! my lady saw you out of the window, and order'd me to bid you fly and let your master know she's now alone.

Whis. Hush ! speak softly ! I go, I go ! But harkye, Mrs. Patch, shall not you and I have a little confabulation, when my master and your lady are engag'd ?

Patch. Ay, ay ; farewell. (*Goes in and shuts the Door. Whisper peeps after her through the Key-hole.*)

Re-enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, R.H. meeting WHISPER.

Sir J. Sure, whilst I was talking with Mr. Tradewell, I heard my door clap. (*Seeing Whisper.*) Ha ! a man lurking about my house ! Who do you want there, sir ?

Whis. Want—want—a plague ! Sir Jealous ! What must I say now ? (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Ay, want ! Have you a letter or message for any body there ?—O'my conscience, this is some he bawd—

Whis. Letter or message, sir ?

Sir J. Ay, letter or message, sir ?

Whis. No, not I, sir.

Sir J. Sirrah, sirrah ! I'll have you set in the stocks if you don't tell your business immediately.

Whis. Nay, sir, my business—is no great matter of business neither, and yet 'tis business of consequence too.

Sir J. Sirrah, don't trifle with me.

Whis. Trifle, sir ! have you found him, sir ?

Sir J. Found what, you rascal ?

Whis. Why, Trifle is the very lapdog my lady lost, sir ; I fancied I saw him run into this house. I'm glad you have him—Sir, my lady will be overjoy'd that I have found him.

Sir J. Who is your lady, friend ?

Whis. My lady Lovepuppy, sir.

Sir J. My lady Lovepuppy, sir ! then pr'ythee carry thyself to her, for I know of no other whelp that belongs to her ; and let me catch you no more puppy-hunting about my doors, lest I have you press'd into the service, sirrah.

Whis. By no means, sir—Your humble servant.—I must watch whether he goes or no before I can tell my master. (*Aside.*) [*Exit, R.H.*]

Sir J. This fellow has the officious leer of a pimp, and I half suspect a design ; but I'll be upon them before they think on me, I warrant 'em.

[*Exit into the House.*]

SCENE IV.—*Charles's Lodgings.*

Enter CHARLES and MARPLOT, R.H.

Charles. Honest Marplot, I thank thee for this supply. I expect my lawyer with a thousand pounds I have ordered him to take up, and then you shall be repaid.

Mar. Pho, pho! no more of that. Here comes sir George Airy,

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, L.H.

cursedly out of humour at his disappointment. See how he looks! ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. Ah, Charles! I am so humbled in my pretensions to plots upon women, that I believe I shall never have courage enough to attempt a chambermaid again—I'll tell thee—

Charles. Ha, ha! I'll spare you the relation by telling you—Impatient to know your business with my father, when I saw you enter I slipp'd back into the next room, where I overheard every syllable.

Mar. Did you Charles? I wish I had been with you.

Sir G. That I said—but I'll be hang'd if you heard her answer—But pr'ythee tell me, Charles, is she a fool?

Charles. I never suspected her for one; but Marplot can inform you better, if you'll allow him a judge.

Mar. A fool! I'll justify she has more wit than all the rest of her sex put together. Why, she'll rally me till I han't a word to say for myself.

Charles. A mighty proof of her wit, truly—

Mar. There must be some trick in't, sir George; 'egad, I'll find it out, if it cost me the sum you paid for't.

Sir G. Do, and command me—

Mar. Enough: let me alone to trace a secret—

Enter WHISPER, L.H. and speaks aside to his Master.

The devil! he here again! damn that fellow, he never speaks out. Is this the same, or a new secret? (*Aside.*) You may speak out, here are none but friends.

Charles. Pardon me, Marplot, 'tis a secret.

Mar. A secret! ay, or ecod I would not give a farthing for it. Sir George, won't you ask Charles what news Whisper brings?

Sir G. Not I, sir; I suppose it does not relate to me.

Mar. Lord, lord! how little curiosity some people have! Now my chief pleasure is in knowing every body's business.

[*Exit Whisper, R.H.*

Sir G. I fancy, Charles, thou hast some engagement upon thy hands?

Mar. Have you, Charles?

Sir G. I have a little business too.

Mar. Have you, sir George?

Sir G. Marplot, if it falls in your way to bring

me any intelligence from Miranda, you'll find me at the Thatch'd-house at six—

Mar. You do me much honour.

Charles. You guess right, sir George; wish me success.

Sir G. Better than attended me. Adieu.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Charles. Marplot, you must excuse me—

Mar. Nay, nay; what need of any excuse amongst friends? I'll go with you.

Charles. Indeed you must not.

Mar. No! then I suppose 'tis a duel; and I will go to secure you.

Charles. Well, but 'tis no duel, consequently no danger; therefore pr'ythee be answer'd.

Mar. What is't a mistress then?—Mum—you know I can be silent upon occasion.

Charles. I wish you could be civil too: I tell you, you neither must nor shall go with me. Farewell.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Mar. Why then—I must and will follow you.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter CHARLES, R.H.

Charles. Well, here's the house which holds

the lovely prize, quiet and serene: here no noisy footmen throng to tell the world that beauty dwells within, no ceremonious visit makes the lover wait, no rival to give my heart a pang. Who would not scale the window at midnight without fear of the jealous father's pistol, rather than fill up the train of a coquette, where every minute he is jostled out of place? (*Knocks softly.*) Mrs. Patch! Mrs. Patch!

Enter PATCH, from the House.

Patch. Oh, are you come, sir? All's safe.

Charles. So in, in then. (*They go in.*)

Enter MARPLOT, R.H.

Mar. There he goes! Who the devil lives here? Except I find out that, I am as far from knowing his business as ever. 'Gad I'll watch; it may be a bawdy-house, and he may have his throat cut. If there should be any mischief, I can make oath he went in. Well, Charles, in spite of your endeavours to keep me out of the secret, I may save your life for aught I know. At that corner I'll plant myself; there I shall see whoever goes in or comes out. 'Gad, I love discoveries. [*Exit, R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*A Chamber in the House of Sir Jealous Traffick.*

Enter CHARLES, ISABINDA, and PATCH, R.H.

Isa. Patch, look out sharp ; have a care of dad.

Patch. I warrant you. [Exit, L.H.]

Isa. Well, sir, if I may judge your love by your courage, I ought to believe you sincere ; for you venture into the lion's den when you come to see me.

Charles. If you'll consent whilst the furious beast is abroad, I'd free you from the reach of his paws.

Isa. That would be but to avoid one danger by running into another, like poor wretches who fly the burning ship, and meet their fate in the water. Come, come, Charles, I fear, if I consult my reason, confinement and plenty is better than liberty and starving. I know you would make the frolic pleasing for a little time, by saying and doing a world of tender things ; but when our small substance is exhausted, and a thousand requisites for life are wanting, love, who rarely dwells with poverty, would also fail us.

Charles. 'Faith, I fancy not ; methinks my heart has laid up a stock will last for life, to back which I have taken a thousand pounds upon my uncle's estate ; that surely will support us till one of our father's relent.

Isa. There's no trusting to that, my friend : I doubt your father will carry his humour to the grave, and mine till he sees me settled in Spain.

Charles. And can you then cruelly resolve to stay till that curs'd Don arrives, and suffer that youth, beauty, fire, and wit to be sacrific'd to the arms of a dull Spaniard, to be immured, and forbid the sight of any thing that's human ?

Isa. No ; when it comes to that extremity, and no stratagem can relieve us, thou shalt list for a soldier, and I'll carry thy knapsack after thee.

Charles. Bravely resolv'd ! the world cannot be more savage than our parents, and fortune generally assists the bold, therefore consent, now why should she put it to a future hazard ? who knows when we shall have another opportunity ?

Isa. Oh, you have your ladder of ropes I suppose and the closet window stands just where it did ; and if you han't forgot to write in characters, Patch will find a way for our assassinations. Thus much of the Spanish contrivance my father's severity has taught me ; I thank him : though I hate the nation, I admire their management in these affairs.

Enter PATCH, L.H.

Patch. Oh, madam ! I see my master coming up the street.

Charles. Oh, the devil ! 'would I had my ladder now ! I thought you had not expected

him till night. Why, why, why, why, what shall I do, madam?

Isa. Oh! for heaven's sake don't go that way; you'll meet him full in the teeth. Oh, unlucky moment!

Charles. 'Adsheart! can you shut me into no cupboard, nor ram me into a chest, ha?

Patch. Impossible, sir; he searches every hole in the house.

Isa. Undone for ever! If he sees you I shall never see you more.

Patch. I have thought on it; run you to your chamber, madam; and, sir, come you along with me; I'm certain you may easily get down from the balcony.

Charles. My life! adieu—Lead on guide.

[*Exeunt Patch and Charles, R.H.*]

Isa. Heavens preserve him. [*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, R.H. followed by MARPLOT.

Sir J. I don't know what's the matter, but I have a strong suspicion all is not right within; that fellow's sauntering about my door, and his tale of a puppy, had the face of a lie, methought. By St. Iago, if I should find a man in the house I'd make mince meat of him—

Mar. Mince-meat! Ah, poor Charles! how I sweat for thee! 'Egad, he's old—I fancy I might bully him, and make Charles have an opinion of

my courage. 'Egad I'll pluck up, and have a touch with him.

Sir J. My own key shall let me in ; I'll give them no warning. *(Feeling for his key.)*

Mar. What's that you say, sir ?
(Going up to sir Jealous.)

Sir J. What's that to you, sir ?
(Turns quick upon him.)

Mar. Yes, 'tis to me, sir ; for the gentleman you threaten is a very honest gentleman. Look to't ; for if he comes not as safe out of your house as he went in—

Sir J. What, is he in then ?

Mar. Yes, sir, he is in then ; and I say if he does not come out, I have half a dozen myrmidons hard by shall beat your house about your ears.

Sir J. Ah ! a combination to undo me—I'll myrmidon you, ye dog, you—Thieves ! thieves !
(Beats Marplot.)

Mar. Murder, murder ! I was not in your house, sir.

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. What's the matter, sir ?

Sir J. The matter, rascal ! you have let a man into my house ; but I'll flay him alive. Follow me ; I'll not leave a mouse-hole unsearch'd. If I find him, by St. Iago, I'll equip him for the opera.

Mar. A deuce of his cane ! there's no trusting to age—What shall I do to relieve Charles ?

'Egad, I'll raise the neighbourhood.—Murder! murder!—(*Charles drops down upon him from the Balcony.*) Charles! faith, I'm glad to see thee safe out, with all my heart!

Charles. A plague of your bawling! how the devil came you here?

Mar. 'Egad, it's very well for you that I was here; I have done you a piece of service: I told the old thunderbolt that the gentleman that was gone in was—

Charles. Was it you that told him, sir? (*Laying hold of him.*) 'Sdeath! I could crush thee into atoms. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Mar. What! will you choke me for my kindness?—Will my inquiring soul never leave searching into other people's affairs till it gets squeez'd out of my body? I dare not follow him now for my blood, he's in such a passion.—i'll go to Miranda; if I can discover aught that may oblige sir George, it may be a means to reconcile me again to Charles.

Sir J. (Within.) Look about! search, find him out!

Mar. Oh, the devil! there's old Crabstick again. [*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Hall in the House of sir Jealous Traffick.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK and his Servants, L.H.

Sir J. Are you sure you have search'd every where?

Serv. Yes, from the top of the house to the bottom.

Sir J. Under the beds and over the beds?

Serv. Yes, and in them too, but found nobody, sir.

Sir J. Why, what could this rogue mean?

Enter ISABINDA and PATCH, R.H.

Patch. Take courage, madam ; I saw him safe out. *(Aside to Isabinda.)*

Isa. Bless me what's the matter, sir?

Sir J. You know best—Pray where's the man that was here just now?

Isa. What man, sir? I saw none.

Patch. Nor I, by the trust you repose in me. Do you think I would let a man come within these doors when you are absent?

Sir J. Ah, Patch! she may be too cunning for thy honesty ; *(Crosses to Patch.)* the very scout that he had set to give warning discovered it to me—and threatened me with half a dozen myrmidons—but I think I maul'd the villain. These afflictions you draw upon me, mistress.

(To Isabinda.)

Isa. Pardon me, sir, 'tis your own ridiculous humour draws you into these vexations, and gives every fool pretence to banter you.

Sir J. No, 'tis your idle conduct, your coquetish flirting into the balcony—Oh! with what joy shall I resign thee into the arms of don Diego Babinetto.

Isa. And with what industry shall I avoid him.

(Aside.)

Sir J. Certainly that rogue had a message from somebody or other, but being balk'd by my coming popp'd that sham upon me. Come along, ye sots, let's see if we can find the dog again. Patch, lock her up, d'ye hear?

[*Exeunt sir Jealous and Servants, 1.H.*

Patch. Yes, sir—Ay, walk till your heels ache, you'll find nobody, I promise you.

Isa. Who could that scout be he talks of?

Patch. Nay, I can't imagine, without it was Whisper.

Isa. Well, dear Patch! let's employ all our thoughts how to escape this horrid don Diego; my very heart sinks at his terrible name.

Patch. Fear not, madam; don Carlos shall be the man, or I'll lose the reputation of contriving; and then what's a chambermaid good for?

[*Exeunt, R.H.*

SCENE V.—*Sir Francis Gripe's House.*

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE, L.H. and MIRANDA, R.H.

Mir. Well, Gardy, how did I perform the dumb scene.

Sir F. To admiration—Thou dear little rogue! let me buss thee for it: nay, adad I will, Char-gy, so muzzle, and tuzzle, and hug thee; I will, i'faith, I will. (*Hugging and kissing her.*)

Mir. Nay, Gardy, don't be so lavish. Who would ride post when the journey lasts for life?

Sir F. Oh, I'm transported! When, when, my dear! wilt thou convince the world of the happy day? when shall we marry, ha?

Mir. There's nothing wanting but your consent, sir Francis.

Sir F. My consent! what does my charmer mean?

Mir. Nay, 'tis only a whim; but I'll have every thing according to form—therefore when you sign an authentic paper, drawn up by an able lawyer, that I have your leave to marry, the next day makes me yours, Gardy.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! a whim indeed! why is it not demonstration I give my leave when I marry thee?

Mir. Not for your reputation, Gardy; the malicious world will be apt to say you trick me into marriage, and so take the merit from my choice: now I will have the act my own, to let the idle fops see how much I prefer a man loaded with years and wisdom.

Sir F. Humph! Pr'ythee leave out years, Chargy; I'm not so old, as thou shalt find. Adad, I'm young: there's a caper for ye! (*Jumps.*)

Mir. Oh, never excuse it; why I like you the better for being old—but I shall suspect you don't love me if you refuse me this formality.

Sir F. Not love thee, Chargy! Adad, I do love thee better than, than, than, better than—what shall I say 'egad, better than money; i'faith I do—

Mir. That's false, I'm sure. (*Aside.*) To prove it do this then.

Sir F. Well, I will do it, Chargy, provided I bring a licence at the same time.

Mir. Ay, and a parson too, if you please. Ha,

ha, ha! I can't help laughing to think how all the young coxcombs about town will be mortified when they hear of our marriage.

Sir F. So they will, so they will! ha, ha, ha!

Mir. Well, I fancy I shall be so happy with my Gardy—

Sir F. If wearing pearls and jewels, or eating gold, as the old saying is, can make thee happy, thou shalt be so, my sweetest, my lovely, my charming, my—verily I know not what to call thee.

Mir. You must know, Gardy, that I'm so eager to have this business concluded, that I have employed my woman's brother, who is a lawyer in the Temple, to settle matters just to your liking; you are to give your consent to my marriage, which is to yourself you know: but, mum, you must take no notice of that. So then I will, that is, with your leave, put my writings into his hands; then to-morrow we come slap upon them with a wedding that nobody thought on, by which you seize me and my estate, and I suppose make a bonfire of your own act and deed.

Sir F. Nay but, Chargy, if—

Mir. Nay, Gardy, no ifs.—Have I refus'd three northern lords, two British peers, and half a score knights, to have you put in your ifs?

Sir F. So thou hast indeed, and I will trust to thy management. 'Od, I'm all of a fire.

Mir. 'Tis a wonder the dry stubble does not blaze. (*Aside.*)

Enter MARPLOT, L.H.

Sir F. How now, who sent for you, sir? What is the hundred pounds gone already?

Mar. No, sir; I don't want money now, Gardy.

Sir F. No, that's a miracle! but there's one thing you want, I'm sure.

Mar. Ay, what's that?

Sir F. Manners! What, had I no servants without?

Mar. None that could do my business, guardian, which is at present with this lady.

Mir. With me, Mr. Marplot? what is it I beseech you?

Sir F. Ay, sir, what is it? any thing that relates to her may be delivered to me.

Mar. I deny that.

Mir. That's more than I do, sir.

(Crosses to Mar.)

Mar. Indeed, madam! Why then to proceed: Fame says, you know best whether she tells truth or not, that you and my most conscionable guardian here design'd, contriv'd, plotted, and agreed to chouse a very civil, honest, honourable gentleman out of a hundred pounds: guilty or not?

Mir. That I contriv'd it!

Mar. Ay, you—you said never a word against it; so far you are guilty.

Sir F. Pray tell that civil, honest, honourable gentleman, that if he has any more such

sums to fool away, they shall be received like the last; ha, ha, ha! Chous'd, quotha! (*Crosses to centre.*) But, harkye, let him know at the same time, that if he dare to report I trick'd him of it, I shall recommend a lawyer to him, who shall show him a trick for twice as much. D'ye hear? tell him that.

Mar. So, and this is the way you use a gentleman, and my friend!

Mir. Is the wretch thy friend?

Mar. The wretch! lookye, madam, don't call names; 'egad, I won't take it.

Mir. Why, you won't beat me, will you? Ha, ha!

Mar. I don't know whether I will or no.

Sir F. Sir, I shall make a servant show you out at the window if you are saucy.

Mar. I am your most humble servant, guardian; I design to go out the same way I came in, I would only ask this lady one question. Don't you think he's a fine gentleman?

Sir F. Who's a fine gentleman?

Mar. Not you, Gardy, not you! Don't you think, in your soul, that sir George Airy is a very fine gentleman?

Mir. He dresses well.

Sir F. Which is chiefly owing to his tailor and valet de chambre.

Mar. Well! and who is your dress owing to, ha? There's a beau, ma'am—do but look at him!

Sir F. Sirrah!

Mir. And if being a beau be a proof of his being a fine gentleman, he may be so.

Mar. He may be so! Why, ma'am the judicious part of the world allow him wit, courage, gallantry, ay, and economy too, though I think he forfeited that character when he flung away a hundred pounds upon your dumb ladyship.

Sir F. Does that gall him? Ha, ha, ha!

Mir. So, sir George, remaining in deep discontent, has sent you his trusty squire, to utter his complaint. Ha, ha; ha!

Mar. Yes, madam! and you like a cruel hard-hearted Jew, value it no more—than I would your ladyship, were I sir George; you, you, you—

Mir. Oh, don't call names: I know you love to be employed, and I'll oblige you, and you shall carry him a message from me.

Mar. According as I like it. What is it?

Mir. Nay, a kind one, you may be sure—First, tell him I have chose this gentleman, to have and to hold, and so forth.

(Taking the hand of Sir F.)

Mar. Much good may it do you!

Sir F. Oh the dear rogue! how I dote on her!

(Aside.)

Mir. And advise his impertinence to trouble me no more, for I prefer sir Francis for a husband before all the universe.

Mar. Oh Lord, oh lord! she's bewitched, that's certain. Here's a husband for eighteen—here's a tit-bit for a young lady—here's a shape, an air, and a grace—here's bones rattling in a leathern bag—*(Turning sir Francis about.)* here's buckram and canvass to scrub you to repentance.

Sir F. Sirrah, my cane shall teach you repentance presently.

Mar. No, faith, I have felt its twin brother from just such a wither'd hand too lately.

Mir. One thing more; advise him to keep from the garden gate on the left hand, for if he dare to saunter there, about the hour of eight, as he us'd to do, he shall be saluted with a pistol or a blunderbuss.

Sir F. Oh, monstrous! Why, Chargy, did he use to come to the garden-gate?

Mir. The gardener describ'd just such another man that always watch'd his coming out, and fain would have brib'd him for his entrance—Tell him he shall find a warm reception if he comes this night.

Mar. Pistols and blunderbusses! 'Egad, a warm reception indeed! I shall take care to inform him of your kindness, and advise him to keep further off.

Mir. I hope he will understand my meaning better than to follow your advice. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. Thou hast sign'd, seal'd, and ta'en possession of my heart for ever, Chargy, ha, ha, ha! and for you, Mr. Saucebox, let me have no more of your messages, if ever you design to inherit your estate, gentleman.

Mar. Why, there 'tis now. Sure I shall be out of your clutches one day—Well, guardian, I say no more: but if you be not as arrant a cuckold as e'er drove bargain upon the Exchange, or paid attendance to a court, I am the son of a whetstone; and so your humble servant.

Mir. Mr. Marplot, don't forget the message ;
ha, ha, ha, ha !

Mar. Nang, nang, nang ! [Exit, L.H.]

Sir F. I am so provok'd—'tis well he's gone.

Mir. Oh, mind him not, Gardy, but let's sign
articles, and then—

Sir F. And then—Adad, I believe I am meta-
morphos'd, my pulse beats high, and my blood
boils, methinks— (Kissing and hugging her.)

Mir. Oh, fie, Gardy ! be not so violent : con-
sider the market lasts all the year.—Well, I'll
in, and see if the lawyer be come : you'll follow.

[Exit, R.H.]

Sir. F. Ay, to the world's end, my dear !
Well, Frank, thou art a lucky fellow in thy old
age to have such a delicate morsel, and thirty
thousand pounds, in love with thee. I shall be
the envy of bachelors, the glory of married men,
and the wonder of the town. Some guardians
would be glad to compound for part of the es-
tate at dispatching an heiress, but I engross the
whole.—O ! mihi præteritos referat si Jupiter an-
nos ! [Exit, R.H.]

SCENE VI.—*A Tavern.*

*SIR GEORGE AIRY and CHARLES discovered, with
Wine, Pens, Ink, and Paper on the Table. WHIS-
PER waiting.*

Sir G. Nay, pr'ythee, don't be grave, Charles :
misfortunes will happen. Ha, ha, ha ! 'tis some
comfort to have a companion in our sufferings.

Charles. I am only apprehensive for Isabinda ; her father's humour is implacable ; and how far his jealousy may transport him to her undoing, shocks my soul to think.

Sir G. But since you escap'd undiscover'd by him, his rage will quickly lash into a calm, never fear it.

Charles. But who knows what that unlucky dog, Marplot, told him ; nor can I imagine what brought him thither : that fellow is ever doing mischief ; and yet, to give him his due, he never designs it. This is some blundering adventure wherein he thought to show his friendship, as he calls it ! a curse on him !

Sir G. Then you must forgive him. What said he ?

Charles. Said ! nay, I had more mind to cut his throat, than to hear his excuses.

Sir G. Where is he ?

Whis. Sir, I saw him go into sir Francis Gripe s, just now.

Charles. Oh ! then he's upon your business, sir George, a thousand to one but he makes some mistake there too.

Sir G. Impossible, without he huffs the lady, and makes love to sir Francis.

Enter DRAWER, L.H.

Draw. Mr. Marplot is below, gentlemen, and desires to know if he may have leave to wait upon ye.

Charles. How civil the rogue is when he has done a fault !

Sir G. Ho ! desire him to walk up. [*Exit Drawer, L.H.*] Pry'thee Charles, throw off this chagrin, and be good company.

Charles. Nay, hang him, I'm not angry with him.

Enter MARPLOT, L.H.

Do but mark his sheepish look, sir George.

Mar. Dear Charles ! don't overwhelm a man already under insupportable affliction. I'm sure I always intend to serve my friends ; but if my malicious stars deny the happiness, is the fault mine ?

Sir G. Never mind him, Mr. Marplot ; he's eat up with spleen. But tell me what says Miranda ?

Mar. Says !—nay, we are all undone there too.

Charles. I told you so ; nothing prospers that he undertakes.

Mar. Why, can I help her having chose your father for better for worse ?

Charles. So ; there's another of fortune's strokes. I suppose I shall be edged out of my estate with twins every year, let who will get 'em.

Sir G. What ! is the woman really possess'd ?

Mar. Yes, with the spirit of contradiction : she railed at you most prodigiously.

Sir G. That's no ill sign.

Mar. You'd say it was no good sign if you knew all.

Sir G. Why, pr'ythee ?

Mar. Harkye, sir George, let me warn you ; pursue your old haunt no more ; it may be dangerous. *(Charles sits down to write.)*

Sir G. My old haunt ! what do you mean ?

Mar. Why, in short then, since you will have it, Miranda vows if you dare approach the garden gate at eight o'clock, as you us'd, you shall meet with a warm reception.

Sir G. A warm reception !

Mar. Ay, a very warm reception—you shall be saluted with a blunderbuss, sir. These were her very words : nay, she bid me tell you so too.

Sir G. Ha ! the garden-gate at eight, as I us'd to do ! 'There must be meaning in this. Is there such a gate, Charles ?

Mar. Is there such a gate, Charles ?

Charles. Yes, yes, it opens into the Park : I suppose her ladyship has made many a scamper through it.

Sir G. It must be an assignation then. Ha ! my heart springs for joy ; 'tis a propitious omen. My dear Marplot ! let me embrace thee ; thou art my friend, my better angel.

Mar. What do you mean, sir George ?

Sir G. No matter what I mean. Here, take a bumper to the garden gate, you dear rogue, you !

Mar. You have reason to be transported, sir George ; I have sav'd your life.

Sir G. My life ! thou hast sav'd my soul, man.

Charles, if thou dost not pledge this health, may'st thou never taste the joys of love.

Charles. Whisper, be sure you take care how you deliver this. (*Gives him a Letter.*) Bring me the answer to my lodgings.

Whis. I warrant you, sir. (*To Charles.*)

Mar. Whither does that letter go? Now dare I not ask for my blood—That fellow knows more secrets than I do.—(*Aside.—Following Whisper as he is going.*)—Whisper! Whisper!

Whis. Sir! (*Aside to Mar.*)

Mar. Whisper, here's half a crown for you. (*Aside to Whis.*)

Whis. Thank ye, sir. (*Aside to Mar.*)

Mar. Now where is that letter going? (*Aside to Whis.*)

Whis. Into my pocket, sir. (*Aside to Mar.*)
[*Exit L.H.*]

Charles. Now I'm for you.

Sir G. To the garden-gate at the hour of eight, Charles: allons; huzza!

Charles. I begin to conceive you.

Mar. That's more than I do, 'egad—To the garden-gate, huzza! (*Drinks.*) But I hope you design to keep far enough off on't, sir George.

Sir G. Ay, ay, never fear that; she shall see I despise her frowns; let her use the blunderbuss against the next fool; she shan't reach me with the smoke, I warrant her; ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Ah, Charles! if you could receive a disappointment thus en cavalier, one should have some comfort in being beat for you.

Charles. The fool comprehends nothing.

(*Aside to Sir G.*)

Sir G. Nor would I have him. Pr'ythee, take him along with thee. (*Aside to Charles.*)

Charles. Enough. (*Aside to Sir G.*)

Sir G. I kiss both your hands—And now for the garden-gate.

It's beauty gives the assignation there,
And love too powerful grows t'admit of fear.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Charles. Come, you shall go home with me.

Mar. Shall I! and are we friends, Charles?—
I am glad of it.

Charles. Come along. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Mar. 'Egad, Charles's asking me to go home with him gives me a shrewd suspicion there's more in the garden-gate than I comprehend. Faith, I'll give him the drop, and away to Gardy's and find it out. [*Exit, R.H.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The outside of Sir Jealous Traffick's House ; Patch Peeping out of the Door.*

Enter WHISPER, L.H.

Whis. Ha! Mrs. Patch, this is a lucky minute, to find you so readily; my master dies with impatience.

Patch. My lady imagin'd so, and by her orders I have been scouting this hour in search of you, to inform you that sir Jealous has invited some friends to supper with him to-night, which gives an opportunity to your master to make use of his ladder of ropes. The closet window shall be open, and Isabinda ready to receive him. Bid him come immediately.

Whis. Excellent! he'll not disappoint, I warrant him.—But hold, I have a letter here which I'm to carry an answer to. I cannot think what language the direction is.

Patch. Pho! 'tis no language, but a character which the lovers invented to avert discovery—Ha! I hear my old master coming down stairs; it is impossible you should have an answer: away, and bid him come himself for that. Be gone, we're ruin'd if you're seen, for he has doubled his care since the last accident.

Whis. I go, I go. [Exit, L.H.]

Patch. There, go thou into my pocket. (*Puts it aside, and it falls down.*) Now I'll up the back stairs lest I meet him—Well, a dexterous chambermaid is the ladies best utensil, I say.

[Exit, L.H.]

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, with a letter in his Hand, R.H.

Sir J. So, this is some comfort; this tells me that signior don Diego Babinetto is safely arrived. He shall marry my daughter the

minute he comes—Ha, ha! what's here? (*Takes up the letter Patch dropped.*) A letter! I don't know what to make of the superscription. I'll see what's withinside. (*Opens it.*)—Humph—'tis Hebrew, I think. What can this mean?—There must be some trick in it. This was certainly design'd for my daughter; but I don't know that she can speak any language but her mother tongue.—No matter for that; this may be one of love's hieroglyphics; and I fancy I saw Patch's tail sweep by: that wench may be a slut, and instead of guarding my honour betray it. I'll find it out, I'm resolv'd—Who's there?

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

What answer did you bring the gentleman I sent you to invite?

Serv. That they'd all wait on you, sir, as I told you before; but I suppose you forgot, sir.

Sir J. Did I so, sir? but I shan't forget to break your head if any of them come, sir.

Serv. Come, sir! why, did not you send me to desire their company, sir?

Sir J. But I send you now to desire their absence. Say I have something extraordinary fallen out, which calls me abroad contrary to expectation, and ask their pardon; and, d'ye hear, send the butler to me.

Serv. Yes, sir.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Enter BUTLER, L.H.

Sir J. If this paper has a meaning I'll find it—Lay the cloth in my daughter's chamber, and bid the cook send supper thither presently.

But. Yes, sir.—Hey-day! what's the matter now? *[Exit, L.H.]*

Sir J. He wants the eyes of Argus that has a young handsome daughter in this town; but my comfort is I shall not be troubled long with her. He that pretends to rule a girl once in her teens had better be at sea in a storm, and would be in less danger. *[Exit, L.H.]*

SCENE II.—*Isabinda's Chamber.*

Enter ISABINDA and PATCH, L.H.

Isa. Are you sure nobody saw you speak to Whisper?

Patch. Yes, very sure, madam; but I heard sir Jealous coming down stairs, so clapped his letter into my pocket. *(Feels for the Letter.)*

Isa. A letter! give it me quickly.

Patch. Bless me! what's become on't—I'm sure I put it— *(Searching still.)*

Isa. Is it possible thou could'st be so careless?—Oh, I'm undone for ever if it be lost.

Patch. I must have dropp'd it upon the stairs. But why are you so much alarm'd? if the worst happens nobody can read it, madam, nor find out whom it was design'd for.

Isa. If it falls into my father's hands the very figure of a letter will produce ill consequences. Run and look for it upon the stairs this moment.

Patch. Nay, I'm sure it can be no where else—
(*Going.*)

Enter BUTLER, L.H.

How now, what do you want?

But. My master ordered me to lay the cloth here for supper.

Isa. Ruin'd past redemption—
(*Aside.*)

Patch. You mistake, sure. What shall we do?

Isa. I thought he expected company to-night—
Oh, poor Charles? oh, unfortunate Isabinda!
(*Aside.*)

But. I thought so too, madam; but I suppose he has altered his mind.

[*Lays the Cloth, and exit, L.H.*]

Isa. The letter is the cause. This heedless action has undone me. Fly and fasten the closet window, which will give Charles notice to retire. Ha! my father! oh, confusion!

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, L.H.

Sir J. Hold, hold, Patch; whither are you going? I'll have nobody stir out of the room till after supper.

Patch. Sir, I was going to reach your easy chair—oh, wretched accident!
(*Aside.*)

Sir J. I'll have nobody stir out of the room. I don't want my easy chair.

Isa. What will be the event of this? (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Harkye, daughter, do you know this hand?

Isa. As I suspected. (*Aside.*)—Hand, do you call it, sir? 'tis some schoolboy's scrawl.

Patch. Oh, invention! thou chambermaid's best friend, assist me! (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Are you sure you don't understand it?

(*Patch feels in her Bosom, and shakes her Coats.*)

Isa. Do you understand it, sir?

Sir J. I wish I did.

Isa. Thank heav'n you do not (*Aside.*) Then I know no more of it than you do, indeed, sir!

Patch. O lord, O, lord! what have you done, sir? why, the paper is mine; I dropp'd it out of my bosom. (*Snatching it from him.*)

Sir J. Ha! yours, mistress?

Patch. Yes, sir, it is.

Sir J. What is it? speak.

Patch. Yes, sir, it is a charm for the tooth-ache—I have worn it these seven years; 'twas given me by an angel for aught I know, when I was raving with the pain, for nobody knew from whence he came nor whither he went. He charged me never to open it, lest some dire vengeance befall me, and heaven knows what will be the event. Oh, cruel misfortune! that I should drop it and you should open it—

Sir J. Plague of your charms and whims for me! if that be all 'tis well enough: there, there, burn it, and I warrant you no vengeance will follow.

Patch. So all's right again thus far. (*Aside.*)

Isa. I would not lose Patch for the world—I'll take courage a little. (*Aside.*) Is this usage for your daughter, sir? must my virtue and conduct be suspected for every trifle? You immure me like some dire offender here, and deny me all the recreations which my sex enjoy, and the custom of the country and modesty allow; yet not content with that, you make my confinement more intolerable by your mistrusts and jealousies. Would I were dead, so I were free from this.

Sir J. To-morrow rids you of this tiresome load: don Diego Babinetto will be here, and then my care ends and his begins.

Isa. Is he come then?—Oh, how shall I avoid this hated marriage! (*Aside.*)

Enter SERVANTS, with Supper, L.H.

Sir J. Come, will you sit down?

Isa. I can't eat, sir.

Patch. No, I dare swear he has given her supper enough. I wish I could get into the closet. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Well, if you can't eat, then give me a song, whilst I do.

Isa. I have such a cold I can scarce speak, sir, much less sing.—How shall I prevent Charles's coming in? (*Aside.*)

Sir J. I hope you have the use of your fingers madam. Play a tune upon your spinnet whilst your woman sings me a song.

Patch. I'm as much out of tune as my lady, if he knew all. (*Aside.*)

Isa. I shall make excellent music.

(*Sits down to play.*)

Patch. Really, sir, I am so frightened about your opening this charm that I can't remember one thing.

Sir J. Pish! hang your charm! come, come, sing any thing.

Patch. Yes, I'm likely to sing, truly. (*Aside.*) Humph, humph; bless me! I can't raise my voice, my heart pants so.

Sir J. Why, what does your heart pant so that you can't play neither? Pray what key are you in, ha!

Patch. Ah, would the key was turned on you once. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Why don't you sing, I say?

Patch. When madam has put her spinnet in tune, sir: humph, humph—

Isa. I cannot play, sir, whatever ails me.

(*Rising.*)

Sir J. Zounds! sit down and play me a tune, or I'll break the spinnet about your ears.

Isa. What will become of me?

(*Sits down and plays.*)

Sir J. Come mistress. (*To Patch.*)

Patch. Yes, sir. (*Sings, but horridly out of tune.*)

Sir J. Hey, hey! why, you are a-top of the house, and you are down in the cellar. What is the meaning of this? is it on purpose to cross me, ha?

Patch. Pray, madam, take it a little lower; I cannot reach that note—nor any note, I fear.

Isa. Well, begin—Oh, Patch, we shall be discovered. (*Aside.*)

Patch. I sink with apprehension, madam. (*Aside*)
Humph, humph. (*Sings.—Charles opens the Closet door, L.H.*)

Charles. Music and singing ! Death ! her father there ! (*The Women shriek.*) 'Then I must fly—
 [*Exit into the Closet, R.H. Sir Jealous rises up hastily, seeing Charles slip back into the Closet.*]

Sir J. Hell and furies ! a man in the closet.—

Patch. Ah ! a ghost ! a ghost !—He must not enter the closet. (*Isabinda throws herself down before the Closet-door as in a swoon.*)

Sir J. The devil ! I'll make a ghost of him, I warrant you. (*Strives to get by.*)

Patch. Oh, hold, sir, have a care ; you'll tread upon my lady—Who waits there ? bring some water. Oh, this comes of your opening the charm. Oh, oh, oh, oh ! (*Weeps aloud.*)

Sir J. I'll charm you, housewife. Here lies the charm that conjur'd this fellow in, I'm sure on't. Come out, you rascal, do so, Zounds ! take her from the door or I'll spurn her from it, and break your neck down stairs. Where are you, sirrah ? Villain ! robber of my honour ! I'll pull you out of your nest. (*Goes into the Closet.*)

Patch. You'll be mistaken, old gentleman ; the bird is flown.

Isa. I'm glad I have 'scap'd so well ; I was almost dead in earnest with the fright.

Re-enter SIR JEALOUS out of the Closet, R.H.

Sir J. Whoever the dog were he has escap'd out of the window, for the sash is up : but though

he is got out of my reach you are not. And first, Mrs. Pander, with your charms for the tooth-ache, get out of my house, go, troop; yet hold, stay, I'll see you out of doors myself; but I'll secure your charge ere I go.

Isa. What do you mean, sir? was she not a creature of your own providing?

Sir J. She was of the devil's providing, for aught I know.

Patch. What have I done, sir, to merit your displeasure?

Sir J. I don't know which of you have done it, but you shall both suffer for it, till I can discover whose guilt it is. Go, get in there; I'll move you from this side of the house. (*Pushes Isabinda in at the Door and locks it, puts the key in his Pocket.*) I'll keep the key myself; I'll try what ghost will get into that room: and now forsooth I'll wait on you down stairs.

Patch. Ay, my poor lady!—Down stairs, sir! but I won't go out, sir, till I have lock'd up my clothes, and that's flat.

Sir J. If thou wert as naked as thou wert born, thou shouldst not stay to put on a rag and that's flat.

[*Exeunt, L.H.D.*]

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

Sir J. (*Putting Patch out of the Door.*) There, go and come no more within sight of my habitation these three days, I charge you.

(*Slaps the Door after her.*)

Patch. Did ever any body see such an old monster!

Enter CHARLES, R.H.U.E.

Oh, Mr. Charles! your affairs and mine are in an ill posture.

Charles. I am inur'd to the frowns of fortune; but what has befall'n thee?

Patch. Sir Jealous, whose suspicious nature is always on the watch, nay, even while one eye sleeps the other keeps sentinel, upon sight of you flew into such a violent passion, that I could find no stratagem to appease him, but in spite of all arguments he lock'd his daughter into his own apartment, and turn'd me out of doors.

Charles. Ha! oh, Isabinda!

Patch. And swears she shall see neither sun nor moon till she is don Diego Babinetto's wife, who arrived last night, and is expected with impatience.

Charles. He dies; yes, by all the wrongs of love he shall: here will I plant myself, and through my breast he shall make his passage, if he enters.

Patch. A most heroic resolution! there might be ways found out more to your advantage: policy is often prefer'd to open force.

Charles. I apprehend you not.

Patch. What think you of personating this Spaniard, imposing upon the father, and marrying your mistress by his own consent?

Charles. Say'st thou so, my angel! Oh, could that be done, my life to come would be too short to recompense thee: but how can I do that when I neither know what ship he came in, nor

from what part of Spain ; who recommends him, or how attended.

Patch. I can solve all this. He is from Madrid, his father's name don Pedro Questo Portento Babinetto. Here's a letter of his to sir Jealous, which he dropp'd one day. You understand Spanish, and the hand may be counterfeited. You conceive me sir ?

Charles. My better genius ! thou hast reviv'd my drooping soul. I'll about it instantly. Come to my lodgings, and we'll concert matters.

[*Exeunt*, L.H.]

SCENE IV.—*A Garden-gate open ; Scentwell waiting within.*

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, L.H.U.E.

Sir G. So, this is the gate, and most invitingly open. If there should be a blunderbuss here now, what a dreadful ditty would my fall make for fools, and what a jest for the wits ; how my name would be roar'd about the streets ! Well, I'll venture all.

Scent. Hist, hist ! sir George Airy (*Comes forward.*)

Sir G. A female voice ! thus far I'm safe—My dear.

Scent. No, I'm not your dear, but I'll conduct you to her. Give me your hand ; you must go through many a dark passage and dirty step before you arrive—

Sir G. I know I must before I arrive at Paradise ; therefore be quick, my charming guide.

Scent. For aught you know. Come, come, your hand, and away.

Sir G. Here, here, child; you can't be half so swift as my desires.

[*Exeunt Through the Gate, R.H.*]

SCENE V.—*The House.*

Enter MIRANDA.

Mir. Well, let me reason a little with my mad self. Now, don't I transgress all rules to venture upon a man without the advice of the grave and wise! But then a rigid, knavish guardian who would have marry'd me—to whom? even to his nauseous self, or nobody. Sir George, is what I have try'd in conversation, inquir'd into his character, and am satisfied in both. Then his love! who would have given a hundred pounds only to have seen a woman he had not infinitely lov'd? So I find my liking him has furnish'd me with arguments enough of his side: and now the only doubt remains whether he will come or no.

Enter SCENTWELL and SIR GEORGE AIRY, L.H.

Scent. That's resolv'd, madam, for here's the knight. [Exit, L.H.]

Sir G. And do I once more behold that lovely object whose idea fills my mind, and forms my pleasing dreams?

Mir. What, beginning again in heroics?—Sir George, don't you remember how little fruit

your last prodigal oration produc'd? Not one bare, single word in answer.

Sir G. Ha! the voice of my incognita! Why did you take ten thousand ways to captivate a heart your eyes alone had vanquish'd?

Mir. No more of these flights. Do you think we can agree on that same terrible bugbear, matrimony, without heartily repenting on both sides?

Sir G. It has been my wish since first my longing eyes beheld you.

Mir. And your happy ears drank in the pleasing news I had thirty thousand pounds.

Sir G. Unkind! Did I not offer you, in those purchas'd minutes, to run the risk of your fortune, so you would but secure that lovely person to my arms?

Mir. Well, if you have such love and tenderness, since our wooing has been short, pray reserve it for our future days, to let the world see we are lovers after wedlock; 'twill be a novelty.

Sir G. Haste then, and let us tie the knot, and prove the envied pair—

Mir. Hold, not so fast; I have provided better than to venture on dangerous experiments headlong—My guardian, trusting to my dissembled love, has given up my fortune to my own disposal, but with this proviso, that he to-morrow morning weds me. He is now gone to Doctor's Commons for a licence.

Sir G. Ha! a licence!

Mir. But I have planted emissaries that infallibly take him down to Epsom, under a pre-

tence that a brother usurer of his is to make him his executor, the thing on earth he covets.

Sir G. 'Tis his known character.

Mir. Now my instruments confirm him this man is dying, and he sends me word he goes this minute. It must be to-morrow ere he can be undeceiv'd : that time is ours.

Sir G. Let us improve it then, and settle on our coming years, endless happiness.

Mir. I dare not stir till I hear he's on the road—then I and my writings, the most material point, are soon remov'd.

Sir G. I have one favour to ask ; if it lies in your power you would be a friend to poor Charles ; though the son of this tenacious man, he is as free from all his vices as nature and a good education can make him ; and, what now I have vanity enough to hope will induce you, he is the man on earth I love.

Mir. I never was his enemy, and only put it on as it help'd my designs on his father. If his uncle's estate ought to be in his possession, which I shrewdly suspect, I may do him a singular piece of service.

Sir G. You are all goodness.

Enter SCENTWELL, L.H.

Scent. Oh, madam ! my master and Mr. Marplot are just coming into the house.

Mir. Undone, undone ? if he finds you here in this crisis all my plots are unravell'd.

Sir G. What shall I do ? Can't I get back into the garden ?

Scent. Oh no ! he comes up those stairs.

Mir. Here, here, here ! Can you condescend to stand behind this chimney-board, sir George ?

Sir G. Any where, any where, dear madam ! without ceremony.

Scent. Come, come, sir, lie close.

(They put him behind the Chimney-board.)

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and MARPLOT, L.H.

SIR FRANCIS peeling an Orange.

Sir F. I could not go, though 'tis upon life and death, without taking leave of dear Chargy. Besides, this fellow buzz'd in my ears that thou might'st be so desperate, as to shoot that wild rake that haunts the garden-gate, and that would bring us into trouble, dear—

Mir. So Marplot brought you back then ?

Mar. Yes, I brought him back.

Mir. I'm oblig'd to him for that, I'm sure.

(Frowning at Marplot aside.)

Mar. By her looks she means she's not oblig'd to me. I have done some mischief now, but what I can't imagine. *(Aside.)*

Sir F. Well, Chargy, I have had three messengers to come to Epsom to my neighbour Squeezum's, who, for all his vast riches, is departing. *(Sighs.)*

Mar. Ay, see what all you usurers must come to.

Sir F. Peace, you young knave ! Some forty years hence I may think on't—But, Chargy, I'll

be with thee to-morrow before those pretty eyes are open ; I will, I will, Chargy, I'll rouse you, i'faith.—Here Mrs. Scentwell, lift up your lady's chimney-board, that I may throw my peel in, and not litter her chamber.

Mir. Oh, my stars ! what will become of us now ? (*Aside.*)

Scent. Oh, pray sir give it me ; I love it above all things in nature, indeed I do.

Sir F. No, no, hussy ; you have the green pip already ; I'll have no apothecary's bills.

(*Goes towards the Chimney.*)

Mir. Hold, hold, hold, dear Gardy ! I have a, a, a, a, a monkey shut up there ; and if you open it before the man comes that is to tame it, 'tis so wild 'twill break all my china or get away, and that would break my heart ; for I'm fond on't to distraction, next thee, dear Gardy ?

(*In a flattering Tone.*)

Sir F. Well, well, Chargy, I won't open it ; she shall have her monkey, poor rogue ! Here, throw this peel out of the window.

[*Exit Scentwell, L.H.*]

Mar. A monkey ! Dear madam let me see it ; I can tame a monkey as well as the best of them all. Oh, how I love the little miniatures of man !

Mir. Be quiet, mischief ; and stand further from the chimney—You shall not see my monkey—who sure— (*Striving with him.*)

Mar. For heaven's sake, dear madam ! let me but peep to see if it be as pretty as lady Fiddle-faddle's. Has it got a chain ?

Mir. Not yet, but I design it one shall last its

lifetime. Nay, you shall not see it—Look, Gardy, how he teazes me!

Sir F. (*Getting between him and the Chimney.*) Sirrah, sirrah, let my Chargy's monkey alone, or bamboo shall fly about your ears. What, is there no dealing with you?

Mar. Pugh, plague of the monkey! here's a rout! I wish he may rival you.

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. Sir, they have put two more horses to the coach as you order'd, and 'tis ready at the door.

Sir F. Well, I am going to be executor; better for thee, jewel. B'ye, Chargy; one buss!—I'm glad thou hast got a monkey to divert thee a little.

Mir. Thank'ye, dear Gardy!—Nay, I'll see you to the coach.

Sir F. That's kind, adad.

Mir. Come along, impertinence. (*To Marplot.*)

Mar. (*Stepping back.*) 'Egad I will see the monkey now. (*Lifts up the board and discovers Sir George.*) O Lord! O lord! Thieves! thieves! murder!

Sir G. Damn ye, you unlucky dog! 'tis I. Which way shall I get out? Show me instantly, or I'll cut your throat.

Mar. Undone, undone! At that door there. But hold, hold; break that china, and I'll bring you off.

(*He runs off at the Corner and throws down some China.*)

Re-enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE, MIRANDA, and
SCENTWELL, L.H.

Sir F. Mercy on me ! what's the matter ?

Mir. O, you toad ! what have you done ?

Mar. No great harm ; I beg of you to forgive me. Longing to see this monkey, I did but just raise up the board, and it flew over my shoulders, scratch'd all my face broke your china, and whisked out of the window.

Sir F. Where, where is it, sirrah ?

Mar. There, there, sir Francis, upon your neighbour Parmazan's pantiles.

Sir F. Was ever such an unlucky rogue ! Sirrah, I forbid you my house. Call the servants to get the monkey again. Pug, pug, pug ! I would stay myself to look for it, but you know my earnest business.

Scent. Oh, my lady will be best to lure it back : all them creatures love my lady extremely.

Mir. Go, go, dear Gardy ! I hope I shall recover it.

Sir F. B'ye, b'ye dearee ! Ah, mischief ! how you look now ! B'ye, b'ye. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Mir. Scentwell, see him in the coach, and bring me word.

Scent. Yes, madam. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Mir. So, sir you have done your friend a signal piece of service, I suppose.

Mar. Why, look you, madam, if I have committed a fault, thank yourself ; no man is more serviceable when I am let into a secret, and

none more unlucky at finding it out. Who could divine your meaning; when you talk'd of a blunderbuss, who thought of a rendezvous? and when you talked of a monkey, who the devil dreamt of sir George?

Mir. A sign you converse but little with our sex, when you can't reconcile contradictions.

Re-enter SCENTWELL, L.H.

Scent. He's gone, madam, as fast as the coach and six can carry him—

Re-enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, R.H.U.E.

Sir G. Then I may appear.

Mar. Here's pug, ma'am—Dear sir George make my peace, on my soul I never took you for a monkey before.

Sir G. I dare swear thou didst not. Madam, I beg you to forgive him.

Mir. Well, sir George, if he can be secret.

Mar. 'Odsheart, madam! I'm secret as a priest when trusted.

Sir G. Why 'tis with a priest our business is at present.

Scent. Madam, here's Mrs. Isabinda's woman to wait on you.

Mir. Bring her up.

Enter PATCH, L.H.

How do ye, Mrs. Patch? What news from your lady?

Patch. That's for your private ear, madam. Sir George, there's a friend of yours has an urgent occasion for your assistance.

Sir G. His name.

Patch. Charles.

Mar. Ha! then there's something a-foot that I know nothing of. (*Aside.*) I'll wait on you, sir George.

Sir G. A third person may not be proper, perhaps. As soon as I have dispatched my own affairs I am at his service. I'll send my servant to tell him I'll wait on him in half an hour.

Mir. How came you employed in this message, Mrs. Patch?

Patch. Want of business, madam; I am discharg'd by my master, but hope to serve my lady still.

Mir. How! discharg'd! you must tell me the whole story within.

Patch. With all my heart, madam.

Mar. Tell it here, Mrs. Patch.—Pish! plague; I wish I were fairly out of the house. I find marriage is the end of this secret; and now I'm half mad to know what Charles wants him for.

(*Aside.*)

Sir G. Madam, I'm doubly press'd by love and friendship. This exigence admits of no delay. Shall we make Marplot of the party?

Mir. If you'll run the hazard, sir George; I believe he means well.

Mar. Nay, nay, for my part I desire to be let into nothing; I'll be gone, therefore pray don't mistrust me.

(*Going.*)

Sir G. So now he has a mind to be gone to Charles : but not knowing what affairs he may have upon his hands at present, I'm resolv'd he shan't stir. (*Aside.*) No, Mr. Marplot, you must not leave us ; we want a third person.

(*Takes hold of him.*)

Mar. I never had more mind to be gone in my life.

Mir. Come along then ; if we fail in the voyage, thank yourself for taking this ill-starr'd gentleman on board.

Sir G. That vessel ne'er can unsuccessful prove, [love.

Whose freight is beauty, and whose pilot's

[*Exeunt Sir George and Miranda, L.H.*

Mar. Tyty ti, tyty ti.

(*Steals off the other Way.*)

Re-enter SIR GEORGE, L.H.

Sir G. Marplot ! Marplot !

Mar. (*Entering.*) Here ! I was coming, sir
George. [*Exeunt, L.H.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Sir Francis Gripe's House.*

Enter MIRANDA, PATCH, and SCENTWELL, R. H.

Mir. Well, Patch, I have done a strange bold thing; my fate is determined, and expectation is no more. Now to avoid the impertinence and roguery of an old man, I have thrown myself into the extravagance of a young one; if he should despise, slight, or use me ill, there's no remedy from a husband but the grave, and that's a terrible sanctuary to one of my age and constitution.

Patch. Oh! fear not, madam; you'll find your account in sir George Airy; it is impossible a man of sense should use a woman ill, endowed with beauty, wit, and fortune. It must be the lady's fault if she does not wear the unfashionable name of wife easy, when nothing but complaisance and good humour is requisite on either side to make them happy.

Mir. I long till I am out of this house, lest any accident should bring my guardian back. Scentwell, put my best jewels into the little casket, slip them into thy pocket, and let us march off to sir Jealous.

Scent. It shall be done, madam. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Patch. Sir George will be impatient, madam. If their plot succeeds, we shall be well receiv'd;

if not, he will be able to protect us. Besides, I long to know how my young lady fares.

Mir. Farewell, old Mammon, and thy detested walls ! 'Twill be no more sweet sir Francis ! I shall be compell'd to the odious task of dissembling no longer to get my own, and coax him with the wheedling names of my precious, my dear, dear Gardy ! O heavens !

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE, behind, R.H.

Sir F. Ah, my sweet Chargy ! don't be frightened ; (*She starts.*) but thy poor Gardy has been abus'd, cheated, fool'd, betray'd ; but nobody knows by whom.

Mir. Undone, past redemption. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. What won't you speak to me, Chargy ?

Mir. I am so surpris'd with joy to see you I know not what to say.

Sir F. Poor, dear girl ! But do you know that my son, or some such rogue, to rob or murder me, or both, contriv'd this journey ? for upon the road I met my neighbour Squeezum well, and coming to town.

Mir. Good lack ! good lack ! what tricks are there in this world !

Re-enter SCENTWELL, R.H. with a diamond Necklace in her Hand, not seeing sir Francis.

Scent. Madam, be pleas'd to tie this necklace on, for I can't get into the—(*Seeing sir Francis.*)

Mir. The wench is a fool, I think ! Could

you not have carried it to be mended without putting it in the box.

Sir F. What's the matter?

Mir. Only, dearee! I bid her—I bid her—Your ill-usage has put every thing out of my head. But won't you go, Gardy, and find out these fellows, and have them punished, and, and—

Sir F. Where should I look for them, child? no, I'll set me down contented with my safety, nor stir out of my own doors till I go with thee to a parson.

Mir. If he goes into his closet I am ruin'd. (*Aside.*) Oh, bless me! In this fright I had forgot Mrs. Patch.

Patch. Ay, madam, and I stay for your speedy answer.

Mir. I must get him out of the house. Now assist me, fortune! (*Aside.*)

Sir F. Mrs. Patch! I profess I did not see you: how dost thou do, Mrs. Patch? Well, don't you repent leaving my Chargy?

Patch. Yes, every body must love her—but I come now—Madam, what did I come for? my invention is at the last ebb. (*Aside to Miranda.*)

Sir F. Nay, never whisper, tell me.

Mir. She came, dear Gardy! to invite me to her lady's wedding, and you shall go with me, Gardy; 'tis to be done this moment, to a Spanish merchant. Old sir Jealous keeps on his humour: the first minute he sees her, the next he marries her.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! ha! I'd go if I thought the sight of matrimony would tempt Chargy to

perform her promise. There was a smile, there was a consenting look, with those pretty twinklers, worth a million! 'Ods-precious! I am happier than the great mogul, the emperor of China, or all the potentates that are not in the wars. Speak, confirm it, make me leap out of my skin.

Mir. When one has resolved, 'tis in vain to stand shilly-shally. If ever I marry, positively this is my wedding-day.

Sir F. Oh! happy, happy man—Verily, I will beget a son the first night shall disinherit that dog Charles. I have estate enough to purchase a barony, and be the immortalizing the whole family of the Gripes.

Mir. Come then, Gardy, give me thy hand; let's to this house of Hymen.

My choice is fix'd, let good or ill betide;

Sir F. The joyful bridegroom I,

Mir. And I the happy bride. [*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE II. *An Apartment in the House of sir Jealous Traffick.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK R.H. meeting a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's a couple of gentlemen inquire for you; one of them calls himself signior Diego Babinetto.

Sir J. Ha! Signior Babinetto! admit 'em instantly—joyful minute; I'll have my daughter married to-night.

Enter CHARLES, L.H. in a Spanish habit, with SIR GEORGE AIRY, dressed like a Merchant.

Senhor, beso las manos : vuestra merced es muy bien venido en esta tierra.

Charles. Senhor, soy muy humi lde, y muy obligado cryado de vuestra merced : mi padre embia a vuestra merced, los mas profundos de sus respetos ; y a commissionado este mercadel Ingles, de concluyr un negocio, que me haze el mas dichos shombre del mundo, haziendo me su yerno.

Sir J. I am glad on't, for I find I have lost much of my Spanish. Sir, I am your most humble servant. Signior don Diego Babinetto has informed me that you are commissioned by Signior don Pedro, &c. his worthy father—

Sir G. To see an affair of marriage consummated between a daughter of yours and signior Diego Babinetto his son here. True, sir, such a trust is repos'd in me, as that letter will inform you.—I hope 'twill pass upon him.

(Aside.)—(Gives him a Letter.)

Sir J. Ay, 'tis his hand. *(Seems to read.)*

Sir G. Good, you have counterfeited to a nicety, Charles. *(Aside to Charles.)*

Sir J. Sir, I find by this that you are a man of honour and probity ; I think, sir, he calls you Meanwell.

Sir G. Meanwell is my name, sir.

Sir J. A very good name, and very significant. For to mean well is to be honest, and to

be honest is the virtue of a friend, and a friend is the delight and support of human society.

Sir G. You shall find that I'll discharge the part of a friend in what I have undertaken, sir Jealous. Therefore, sir, I must entreat the presence of your fair daughter, and the assistance of your chaplain; for signior don Pedro strictly enjoined me to see the marriage rites performed as soon as we should arrive, to avoid the accidental overtures of Venus.

Sir J. Overtures of Venus!

Sir G. Ay, sir; that is, those little hawking females that traverse the park and the play-house to put off their damag'd ware—they fasten upon foreigners like leeches, and watch their arrival as carefully as the Kentish men do a shipwreck: I warrant you they have heard of him already.

Sir J. Nay, I know this town swarms with them.

Sir G. Ay, and then you know the Spaniards are naturally amorous, but very constant; the first face fixes 'em; and it may be very dangerous to let him ramble ere he is tied.

Sir J. Pat to my purpose—Well, sir, there is but one thing more, and they shall be married instantly.

Charles. Pray heaven that one thing more won't spoil all. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Don Pedro wrote me word, in his last but one, that he designed the sum of five thousand crowns by way of jointure for my daughter, and that it should be paid into my hand upon the day of marriage—

Charles. Oh, the devil! (*Aside.*)

Sir J. In order to lodge it in some of our funds in case she should become a widow, and return to England—

Sir G. Plague on't! this is an unlucky turn. What shall I say? (*Aside.*)

Sir J. And he does not mention one word of it in this letter.

Sir G. Humph! True, sir Jealous, he told me such a thing, but, but, but, but—he, he, he, he—he did not imagine that you would insist upon the very day; for, for, for, for money, you know, is dangerous returning by sea, an, an, an—

Charles. Zounds! say we have brought it in commodities. (*Aside to sir G.*)

Sir G. And so, sir, he has sent it in merchandize tobacco, sugars, spices, lemons, and so forth, which shall be turned into money with all expedition; in the mean time, sir, if you please to accept of my bond for performance—

Sir J. It is enough, sir; I am so pleas'd with the countenance of signior Diego, and the harmony of your name, that I'll take your word, and will fetch my daughter this moment. Within there.

Enter SERVANT L.H.

Desire Mr. Tackum, my neighbour's chaplain, to walk hither.

Serv. Yes, sir. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Sir J. Gentlemen, I'll return in an instant.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Sir G. 'Egad, that five thousand crowns had like to have ruined the plot.

Charles. But that's over; and if fortune throws no more rubs in our way—

Sir G. Thou'lt carry the prize—But hist! here he comes.

Re-enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, dragging in ISABINDA, R.H.

Sir J. Come along, you stubborn baggage, you! come along.

Isa. Oh! hear me, sir, hear me but speak one word;

Do not destroy my everlasting peace;
My soul abhors this Spaniard you have chose.

Sir J. How's that?

Isa. Let this posture move your tender nature.
(*Kneels.*)

For ever will I hang upon these knees,
Not loose my hands till you cut off my hold,
If you refuse to hear me, sir.

Sir J. Did you ever see such a perverse slut? Off, I say. Mr. Meanwell, pray help me a little.

Sir G. Rise, madam, and do not disoblige your father, who has provided a husband worthy of you, one that will love you equal with his soul, and one that you will love, when once you know him.

Isa. Oh! never, never!
Could I suspect that falsehood in my heart,
I would this moment tear it from my breast,
And straight present him with the treach'rous part.

Sir J. Falsehood! why, who the devil are you in love with? Don't provoke me, or by St. Iago I shall beat you, housewife.

Sir G. Sir Jealous, you are too passionate. Give me leave, I'll try by gentle words to work her to your purpose.

Sir J. I pray do, Mr. Meanwell, I pray do; she'll break my heart. (*Weeps.*) There is in that casket jewels of the value of three thousand pounds, which were her mother's, and a paper wherein I have settled one-half of my estate upon her now, and the whole when I die, but provided she marries this gentleman, else by St. Iago, I'll turn her out of doors to beg or starve. Tell her this, Mr. Meanwell, pray do. (*Walks toward Charles.*)

Sir G. Ha! this is beyond expectation (*Aside.*) Trust to me, sir, I'll lay the dangerous consequence of disobeying you at this juncture before her, I warrant you. Come, madam, do not blindly cast your life away just in the moment you would wish to save it.

Isa. Pray cease your trouble, sir: I have no wish but death to free me from this hated Spaniard. If you are his friend, inform him what I say.

Sir G. Suppose this Spaniard, which you strive to shun, should be the very man to whom you'd fly?

Isa. Ha!

Sir G. Would you not blame your rash resolve, and curse your eyes that would not look on Charles?

Isa. On Charles ! Where is he ? *(Rises.)*

Sir G. Hold, hold, hold, 'Sdeath ! madam, you'll ruin all. Your father believes him to be signior Babinetto. Compose yourself a little, pray madam. *(He runs to Sir Jealous.)* She begins to hear reason, sir ; the fear of being turned out of doors has done it. Speak gently to her, sir ; I'm sure she'll yield ; I see it in her face.

Sir J. Well, Isabinda, can you refuse to bless a father whose only care is to make you happy.

Isa. Oh, sir ! do with me what you please ; I am all obedience.

Sir J. And wilt thou love him ?

Isa. I will endeavour it, sir.

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. Sir, here is Mr. Tackum.

Sir J. Show him into the parlour. *[Exit Servant, L.H.]* Senhor tome vind sueipora ; cette momento les junta les manos.

(Gives her to Charles.)

Charles. Senhor, yo la recibo como se deve un tesora tan grande. *(Embraces her.)*

Sir J. Now, Mr. Meanwell, let's to the parson, Who, by his art, will join this pair for life, Make me the happiest father, her the happiest wife. *[Exeunt, R.H.]*

SCENE III.—*A Street before Sir Jealous Traffick's House.*

Enter MARPLOT, L.H.

Mar. I have hunted all over the town for Charles, but can't find him, and by Whisper's scouting at the end of the street, I suspect he must be in the house again. I am informed too that he has borrowed a Spanish habit out of the playhouse: what can it mean?

Enter a SERVANT of Sir Jealous Traffick's to him out of the House.

Harkye, sir, do you belong to this house?

Serv. Yes, sir.

Mar. Isn't your name Richard?

Serv. No, sir; Thomas.

Mar. Oh, ay, Thomas—Well, Thomas, there's a shilling for you.

Serv. 'Thank you, sir.

Mar. Pray, Thomas, can you tell if there be a gentleman in it in a Spanish habit?

Serv. There's a Spanish gentleman within that is just a-going to marry my young lady, sir.

Mar. Are you sure he is a Spanish gentleman?

Serv. I'm sure he speaks no English that I hear of.

Mar. Then that can't be him I want, for 'tis an English gentleman that I inquire after; he may be dressed like a Spaniard, for aught I know.

Serv. Ha ! who knows but this may be an imposter ? I'll inform my master, for if he should be impos'd upon, he'll beat us all round. (*Aside.*) Pray come in, sir, and see if this be the person you inquire for.

Mar. Ay, I'll follow you. Now for it.

[*Exeunt into the house.*]

SCENE IV.—*The inside of the house.*

Enter MARPLOT and SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. Sir, please to stay here ; I'll send my master to you. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Mar. So this was a good contrivance. If this be Charles now, he will wonder how I found him out.

Re-enter SERVANT and SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, R.H.

Sir J. What is your earnest business, block-head ! that you must speak with me before the ceremony's past ? Ha ! who this ?

Serv. Why this gentleman, sir, wants another gentleman in a Spanish habit he says.

Sir J. In a Spanish habit ! 'tis some friend of signior don Diego's, I warrant. (*Aside.*) Sir, your servant.

Mar. Your servant, sir.

Sir J. I suppose you would speak with signior Babinetto.

Mar. Sir !

Sir J. I say, I suppose you would speak with signior Babinetto ?

Mar. Hey-day ! what the devil does he say now ? (*Aside.*) Sir, I dont understand you.

Sir J. Don't you understand Spanish, sir ?

Mar. Not I indeed, sir.

Sir J. I thought you had known signior Babinetto.

Mar. Not I, upon my word, sir.

Sir J. What then you'd speak with his friend, the English merchant, Mr. Meanwell ?

Mar. Neither, sir, not I ; I don't mean any such thing.

Sir J. Why, who are you then, sir ? and what do you want ? (*In an angry Tone.*)

Mar. Nay nothing at all, not I, sir—Plague on him ! I wish I were out ; he begins to exalt his voice ! I shall be beaten again. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Nothing at all, sir ! Why then what business have you in my house, ha ?

Serv. You said you wanted a gentleman in a Spanish habit.

Mar. Why, ay but his name is neither Babinetto nor Meanwell.

Sir J. What is his name then, sirrah ? Ha ! now I look at you again, I believe you are the rogue that threatened me with half a dozen myrmidons—

Mar. Me, sir ! I never saw your face in all my life before.

Sir J. Speak, sir ; who is it you look for ? or, or—

Mar. A terrible old dog ! (*Aside.*) Why, sir, only an honest young fellow of my acquaintance I thought that here might be a ball, and that

he might have been here in a masquerade.—'Tis Charles, sir Francis Gripe's son,—because I know he us'd to come hither sometimes.

Sir J. Did he so?—Not that I know of, I'm sure. Pray heaven that this be don Diego—If I should be trick'd now—Ha! my heart mis-gives me plaguily—Within there! stop the marriage—Run, sirrah, call all my servants! I'll be satisfied that this is signior Pedro's son ere he has my daughter.

Mar. Ha! sir George! what have I done now?

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, with a drawn sword, between the Scenes, R. H.

Sir G. Ha! Marplot here—oh, the unlucky dog—What's the matter, sir Jealous?

Sir J. Nay, I don't know the matter, Mr. Meanwell.

Mar. Upon my soul, sir George—

(Going up to sir George.)

Sir J. Nay then, I'm betray'd, ruin'd, undone.—Thieves, traitors, rogues! *(Offers to go in.)* Stop the marriage, I say—

Sir G. I say go on, Mr. Tackum—Nay, no entering here; I guard this passage, old gentleman: the act and deed were both your own, and I'll see 'em sign'd, or die for't.

Enter SERVANT, L. H.

Sir J. A plague on the act and deed!—Fall on sir, knock him down.

Sir G. Ay, come on scoundrels! I'll prick your jackets for you.

Sir J. Zounds! sirrah, I'll be reveng'd on you. *(Beats Marplot.)*

Sir G. Ay, there your vengeance is due. Ha, ha!

Mar. Why, what do you beat me for? I ha'nt married your daughter.

Sir J. Rascals! why don't you knock him down?

Serv. We are afraid of his sword, sir; if you'll take that from him, we'll knock him down presently.

Enter CHARLES and ISABINDA, R.H.

Sir J. Seize her then.

Charles. Rascals, retire, she's my wife; touch her if you dare; I'll make dogs'-meat of you.

Mar. Ay, I'll make dogs'-meat of you, rascals.

Sir J. Ah! downright English—Oh, oh, oh, oh!

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and MIRANDA, L.H.

Sir F. Into the house of joy we enter without knocking—Ha! I think 'tis the house of sorrow, sir Jealous.

Sir J. Oh, sir Francis, are you come? What! was this your contrivance, to abuse, trick, and chouse me out of my child?

Sir F. My contrivance! what do you mean?

Sir J. No, you don't know your son there in a Spanish habit?

Sir F. How! my son in a Spanish habit! Sirrah, you'll come to be hang'd. Get out of my sight, ye dog! get out of my sight.

Sir J. Get out of your sight, sir! get out with your bags. Let's see what you'll give him now to maintain my daughter on.

Sir F. Give him! he shall never be the better for a penny of mine--and you might have look'd after your daughter better, sir Jealous. Trick'd quotha! 'Egad, I think you design'd to trick me: but look ye, gentlemen, I believe I shall trick you both. This lady is my wife, do you see, and my estate shall descend only to her children.

Sir G. I shall be extremely obliged to you, sir Francis.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha, ha! poor sir George! does not your hundred pounds stick in your stomach? ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. No faith, sir Francis, this lady has given me a cordial for that.

(Takes her by the Hand.)

Sir F. Hold, sir, you have nothing to say to this lady.

Sir G. Nor you nothing to do with my wife, sir.

Sir F. Wife, sir!

Mir. Ay, really, guardian, 'tis even so. I hope you'll forgive my first offence.

Sir F. What have you chous'd me out of my consent and your writings then, mistress, ha?

Mir. Out of nothing but my own. guardian.

Sir J. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis some comfort at least to see you are over-reach'd as well as myself. Will you settle your estate upon your son now!

Sir F. He shall starve first.

Mir. That I have taken care to prevent. There, sir, are the writings of your uncle's estate, which have been your due these three years. (*Gives Charles papers.*)

Charles. I shall study to deserve this favour.

Mar. Now how the devil could she get those writings, and I know nothing of it.

Sir F. What have you robb'd me too, mistress? 'Egad, I'll make you restore 'em—hussy, I will so.

Sir J. Take care I don't make you pay the arrears, sir. 'Tis well 'tis no worse, since 'tis no better. Come young man, seeing thou hast outwitted me, take her, and bless you both!

Charles. I hope, sir, you'll bestow your blessing too; 'tis all I ask. (*Kneels.*)

Mar. Do, Gardy, do.

Sir F. Confound you all! [*Exit, L.H.*]

Mar. Mercy upon us, how he looks!

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! ne'er mind his curses, Charles; thou'lt thrive not one jot the worse for 'em. Since this gentleman is reconcil'd we are all made happy.

Sir J. I always lov'd precaution, and took care to avoid dangers; but when a thing was past, I ever had philosophy to be easy.

Charles. Which is the true sign of a great soul. I lov'd your daughter, and she me, and you shall have no reason to repent her choice.

Isa. You will not blame me, sir, for loving my own country best.

Mar. So here's every body happy, I find, but

poor Pilgarlick. I wonder what satisfaction I shall have for being cuff'd, kick'd, and beaten in your service !

Sir J. I have been a little too familiar with you as things are fallen out ; but since there's no help for't, you must forgive me.

Mar. 'Egad I think so—but provided that you be not so familiar for the future.

Sir G. Thou hast been an unlucky rogue.

Mar. But very honest.

Charles. That I'll vouch for, and freely forgive thee.

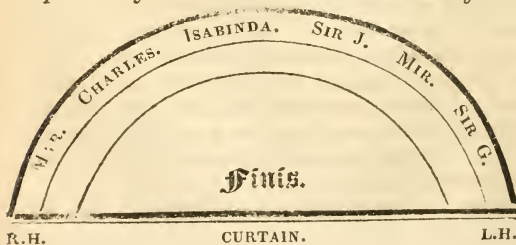
Sir G. And I'll do you one piece of service more, Marplot ; I'll take care sir Francis makes you master of your estate.

Mar. That will make me as happy as any of you.

Sir J. Now let us in, and refresh ourselves with a cheerful glass, in which we'll bury all animosities ; and

By my example let all parents move,
And never strive to cross their children's love ;
But still submit that care to Providence above.

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



Epilogue.

IN me you see one busy body more,
Though you may have enough of one before.
With epilogues, the busy body's way,
We strive to help, but sometimes mar a play.
At this mad sessions, half-condemn'd ere try'd,
Some in three days have been turn'd off, and dy'd :
In spite of parties, their attempts are vain,
For, like false prophets, they ne'er rise again.
Too late, when cast, your favour one beseeches,
And epilogues prove execution speeches.
Yet sure I spy no busy bodies here,
And one may pass, since they do ev'ry where.
Sour critics, time, and breath, and censures waste,
And balk your pleasure to refine your taste ;
One busy don ill-tim'd high tenets preaches,
Another yearly shows himself in speeches ;
Some sniv'ling cits would have a peace for spite,
To starve those warriors who so bravely fight ;
Still of a foe upon his knees afraid,
Whose well-bang'd troops want money, heart, and bread.
Old beaux, who none, not e'en themselves, can please,
Are busy still for nothing—but to tease ;
The young, so busy to engage a heart,
The mischief done are busy most to part ;
Ungrateful wretches ! who still cross one's will,
When they more kindly might be busy still :

One to a husband who ne'er dream'd of horns,
Shows how dear spouse with friend his brows adorns ;
'Th' officious tell-tale fool (he should repent it.)
Parts three kind souls that liv'd at peace contented.
Some with law quirks set houses by the ears ;
With physic one what he would heal impairs ;
Like that dark, mop'd up fry, that neighb'ring curse,
Who to remove love's pains bestow a worse.
Since then this meddling tribe infest the age,
Bear one awhile expos'd upon the stage ;
Let none but busy bodies vent their spite,
And, with good-humour, pleasure crown the night.

Oxberry's Edition.

JANE SHORE.

A TRAGEDY ;

By Nicholas Rowe.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY
MARKED WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS,
AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

By W. OXBERRY, *Comedian.*

B O S T O N :

PUBLISHED BY WELLS AND LILLY—COURT-STREET :

A. T. GOODRICH & CO.—NEW-YORK :

E. LITTELL, PHILADELPHIA.

1822.

Remarks.

JANE SHORE.

IT is a rare felicity in any author to produce two tragedies which shall last their century. Rowe, the author of the *Fair Penitent*, and of *Jane Shore*, has attained this posthumous honour. It is curious to reflect in this respect on the disproportion between human wishes and their accomplishment. The aspiration of the mind is after the highest excellence, its longings are after immortality: its performance is generally as nothing; its triumph but for a moment!—How many matchless works have perished in embryo, even with the thought that gave them birth?—how many have fallen still-born from the press?—how many have been damned on their first appearance, “a sacrifice to grinning scorn and infamy?”—how many have lingered on a few nights, and then dropped into deathless oblivion, mocking their authors’ feverish hopes?—how many have been popular for a time, and then given place to others?—how few have remained, what all were designed to be?—heirs of universal praise, and the lasting ornament and delight of the public mind!—There are, it should seem, but two ways in which an author can hope to acquire this permanent reputation and influence, over the thoughts and feelings of others; either by the force and originality of his own conceptions, or by the warmth and vigour with which

he enters into, and is able to express popular and obvious sentiments. The last of these appears to have been the *forte* of Rowe, in his tragic compositions; and is that which has given them so considerable and fixed a hold, over the minds of his countrymen. In writing for the stage, he does not seem to consult his own breast, or to consider what the parties themselves would have felt; but to give language to the thoughts that would be suggested on such an occasion, to the spectators. His great object is stage-effect, and common sympathy; and this he secures,—first, by the selection of a well-known, or perfectly intelligible story,—by striking situations and obvious sources of calamity; and, secondly, by ingrafting on the tragic spectacle frequent and vehement exclamations of grief,—of wonder, of horror, &c.; and general reflections of morality, such as are the offspring rather of speculative indifference, than of real passion. If to unlock and control the deeper and more powerful springs of thought and feeling is the highest proof of genius, yet to obtain the almost unlimited command over the more vulgar and superficial sympathy which is excited by well-placed shew and verbal declamation, is no mean nor easy task; as may be seen, from the few who succeed in doing it with continued success. *Jane Shore* is a tragedy, the reputation of which is embalmed in the tears it has drawn from numberless eyes. The aggravated distress of the heroine, her reverse of fortune, her unmerited ill treatment by those she trusts, the attachment of her husband to her, (the motives of which we could only respect in her peculiar circumstances,) her boasted beauty of form, and her apparent patience and resignation of temper, certainly make an appeal to the affections which is not easily resisted. *Alicia* is not a very pleasant, though a very probable character; and would hardly be endured in

the virulence of her actions, and the extravagance of her speeches ; but that she meets with a triumphant foil in her more amiable, but not more fortunate friend. The mercenary generosity of Hastings, which is turned into sudden hatred on his meeting with an unexpected repulse to his amorous overtures, is well understood, and distinctly portrayed. Gloster is a character of considerable stateliness of deportment, and energy of purpose ; and would have a better effect, did we not compare it indirectly with the same character in Shakspeare. The incident of his coming into the council-chamber with his bared arm, and accusing Hastings of withering it up by sorcery, is literally taken from Shakspeare ; but luckily for Rowe, Cibber has left out this striking scene, in his alteration of *Richard the Third*. The language of Rowe, is often modelled on that of his great predecessor ; and is sometimes, even borrowed from Scripture :—so willing was our author to avail himself of any resources within his reach. His verse is smooth and equal, if not flowing or mellifluous ; and is raised above prose, if it is not elevated into the highest strain of poetry. Perhaps, the chief character in this play has never been so well represented, as it was by Mrs. Siddons ; and indeed, it requires the highest dignity of the human form and expression, to reconcile us completely to the exhibition of the last calamity of human nature,—the failure of life from the want of its common sustenance. W. H.

Mr. Nicholas Rowe was born at Little Beckford, in Bedfordshire, in 1673 ; he was first sent to a private school at Highgate ; and, being afterwards removed to Westminster, was at twelve years chosen one of the King's scholars. At sixteen he was entered a student of the Middle Temple. When he was nineteen, he was, by the death of his father, left more to his own direction, and probably from that time

suffered law gradually to give way to poetry. At twenty-five he produced the “Ambitious Step-mother;” which was received with so much favour, that he devoted himself from that time wholly to elegant literature. He was willing enough to improve his fortune by other arts than poetry. He was Under-Secretary for three years when the duke of Queensberry was Secretary of State: and afterwards applied to the Earl of Oxford for some public employment. Oxford enjoined him to study Spanish; and when, some time afterwards he came again, and said that he had mastered it, dismissed him with this congratulation, “Then, sir, I envy you the pleasure of reading Don Quixote in the original.” At the accession of King George he was made Poet-laureat. In person he was graceful and well made, his face regular and of manly beauty.—He was master of most parts of polite learning, especially the classical authors, both Greek and Latin; understood the French, Italian and Spanish Languages, and spoke the first fluently, and the others tolerably well. He was twiced married;—first to the daughter of a Mr. Parsons, one of the Auditors of the Revenue; and afterwards to a daughter of a Mr. Devenish, of a good family in Dorsetshire. By the first he had a son, and by the second a daughter. He died the sixth of December, 1718, in the forty-fifth year of his age, and was buried in Westminster Abbey:—His Dramatic Works are;—*The Ambitious Step Mother, T.—Tamerlane, T.—Fair Penitent, T.—The Biter, C.—Ulysses, T.—Royal Convert, T.—Jane Shore, T.—and Lady Jane Grey, T.*

Prologue.

To-night, if you have brought your good old taste,
We'll treat you with a downright English feast :
A tale, which, told long since in homely wise,
Hath never fail'd of melting gentle eyes.
Let no nice sir despise our hapless dame,
Because recording ballads chaunt her name ;
Those venerable ancient song-enditers
Soar'd many a pitch above our modern writers :
They caterwaul'd in no romantic ditty,
Sighing for Phillis', or Chloe's pity.
Justly they drew the fair, and spoke her plain,
And sung her by her christian name—'twas Jane.
Our numbers may be more refin'd than those,
But what we've gain'd in verse, we've lost in prose.
Their words no shuffling, double-meaning knew,
Their speech was homely, but their hearts were true.
In such an age, immortal Shakspeare wrote,
By no quaint rules, nor hampering critics taught ;
With rough majestic force he mov'd the heart,
And strength and nature made amends for art.
Our humble author does his steps pursue,
He owns he had the mighty bard in view ;
And in these scenes has made it more his care,
To rouse the passions, than to charm the ear.
Yet for those gentle beaux who love the chime,
The end of acts still gingle into rhyme.

The ladies, too, he hopes will not complain,
 Here are some subjects for a softer strain,
 A nymph forsaken, and a perjur'd swain.
 What most he fears, is, lest the dames should frown,
 The dames of wit and pleasure about town
 To see our picture drawn, unlike their own.
 But lest that error should provoke to fury
 The hospitable hundreds of Old Drury,
 He bid me say, in our Jane Shore's defence,
 She do'd about the charitable pence,
 Built hospitals, turn'd saint, and dy'd long since.
 For her example, whatsoe'er we make it,
 They have their choice to let alone or take it.
 Though few, as I conceive, will think it meet,
 To weep so sorely for a sin so sweet :
 Or mourn and mortify the pleasant sense,
 To rise in tragedy two ages hence.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is two hours and thirty minutes. The first act occupies the space of thirty minutes;—the second, thirty-five;—the third, twenty;—the fourth, thirty-five;—the fifth, thirty. The half-price commences, generally, at about a quarter before nine.

Costume.

LORD HASTINGS.

Blue doublet, trunks, and cloak, trimmed with gold, black velvet hat, and white feathers.

DUKE OF GLOSTER.

A purple velvet doublet and trunks, crimson velvet robe, richly embroidered.

BELMOUR.

Grey dress trimmed with black.

RATCLIFFE.

Buff doublet and trunks, scarlet cloak, embroidered with silver.

CATESBY.

Light blue doublet and trunks, and cloak trimmed with silver.

SHORE.

First dress.—Slate coloured kerseymere.—Second dress.—Black velvet.

JANE SHORE.

First dress.—Grey satin Old English dress trimmed with point lace, and lined with black.—Second dress.—White muslin.

ALICIA.

First dress.—White satin, trimmed with beads and point lace.—Second dress.—Black velvet, and black crape veil.

Persons Represented.

As it was originally acted, 1713.

<i>Lord Hastings</i>	- - - - -	Mr. Booth.
<i>Duke of Gloster</i>	- - - - -	Mr. Cibber.
<i>Belmour</i>	- - - - -	Mr. Mills.
<i>Sir Richard Ratcliffe</i>	- - - - -	Mr. Bowman.
<i>Sir William Catesby</i>	- - - - -	Mr. Husband.
<i>Shore</i>	- - - - -	Mr. Wilkes.
<i>Jane Shore</i>	- - - - -	Mrs. Oldfield.
<i>Alicia</i>	- - - - -	Mrs. Porter.

	<i>Drury-lane.</i>	<i>Covent-garden.</i>
<i>Lord Hastings</i>	- - - - - Mr. Rae.	Mr. Young.
<i>Duke of Gloster</i>	- - - - - Mr. Bengough.	Mr. Egerton.
<i>Belmour</i>	- - - - - Mr. Hamblin.	Mr. Claremont.
<i>Sir Richard Ratcliffe</i>	- - - - - Mr. Marshall.	Mr. Treby.
<i>Sir William Catesby</i>	- - - - - Mr. Ley.	Mr. Connor.
<i>Shore</i>	- - - - - Mr. Holland	Mr. Macready.
<i>Jane Shore</i>	- - - - - Mrs. W. West.	Miss O'Neill.
<i>Alicia</i>	- - - - - Mrs. Glover.	Mrs. Bunn.

Lords of the Council, &c.

Stage Directions.

By R.H.	- - - - - is meant	- - - - - Right Hand.
L.H.	- - - - -	Left Hand.
S.E.	- - - - -	Second Entrance.
U.E.	- - - - -	Upper Entrance.
M.D.	- - - - -	Middle Door.
D.F.	- - - - -	Door in Flat.
R.H.D.	- - - - -	Right Hand Door.
L.H.D.	- - - - -	Left Hand Door.

JANE SHORE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Tower.*

Enter the DUKE of GLOSTER, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE, and CATESBY, R.H.

Glos. Thus far success attends upon our councils,

And each event has answered to my wish ;
The queen and all her upstart race are quell'd ;
Dorset is banish'd, and her brother Rivers,
Ere this, lies shorter by the head at Pomfret.
The nobles have with joint concurrence, nam'd
me

Protector of the realm ; my brother's children,
Young Edward and the little York are lodg'd
Here, safe within the Tower. How say you,
sirs,

Does not this business wear a lucky face ?
The sceptre and the golden wreath of royalty
Seem hung within my reach.

Sir R. Then take 'em to you,

And wear them long and worthily : you are
 The last remaining male of princely York ;
 (For Edward's boys, the state esteems not of
 'em,)

And therefore on your sov'reignty and rule
 The commonweal does her dependence make,
 And leans upon your highness' able hand.

Cates. And yet to-morrow does the council
 meet

To fix a day for Edward's coronation.
 Who can expound this riddle ?

Glos. That can I.

[friends,

Those lords are each one my approv'd good
 Of special trust and nearness to my bosom ;
 And howsoever busy they may seem,
 And diligent to bustle in the state,
 Their zeal goes on no further than we lead,
 And at our bidding stays.

Cates. Yet there is one,
 And he amongst the foremost in his power
 Of whom I wish your highness were assur'd.
 For me, perhaps it is my nature's fault,
 I own I doubt of his inclining much.

Glos. I guess the man at whom your words
 Hastings—

[would point :

Cates. The same.

Glos. He bears me great good will. [tor,

Cates. 'Tis true, to you, as to the lord protec-
 And Gloster's duke, he bows with lowly service :
 But were he bid to cry, God save king Richard,
 Then tell me in what terms he would reply.
 Believe me, I have prov'd the man, and found
 him :

I know he bears a most religious reverence
To his dead master Edward's royal memory.
And whither that may lead him, 'is most plain.
Yet more—One of that stubborn sort he is,
Who, if they once grow fond of an opinion,
They call it honour, honesty, and faith,
And sooner part with life than let it go.

Glos. And yet this tough, impracticable heart,
Is govern'd by a dainty-finger'd girl;
Such flaws are found in the most worthy na-
tures;

A laughing, toying wheedling, whimpering she
Shall make him amble on a gossip's message,
And take the distaff with a hand as patient
As e'er did Hercules.

Sir R. The fair Alicia,
Of noble birth and exquisite of feature,
Has held him long a vassal to her beauty.

Cates. I fear he fails in his allegiance there;
Or my intelligence is false, or else
The dame has been too lavish of her feast,
And fed him till he loathes

Glos. No more, he comes.

Enter LORD HASTINGS, L.H.

Has. Health, and the happiness of many days,
Attend upon your grace.

Glos. My good lord Chamberlain,
We're much beholden to your gentle friendship.

Has. My lord, I come an humble suitor to you.

Glos. In right good time. Speak out your
pleasure freely.

Has. I am to move your highness in behalf
Of Shore's unhappy wife.

Glos. Say you, of Shore?

Has. Once a bright star, that held her place
on high :

The first and fairest of our English dames,
While Royal Edward held the sov'reign rule.
Now sunk in grief, and pining with despair,
Her waning form no longer shall incite
Envy in woman, or desire in man.

She never sees the sun, but through her tears,
And wakes to sigh the live-long night away.

Glos. Marry! the times are badly chang'd
with her, [jollity,
From Edward's days to these. Then all was
Feasting and mirth, light wantonness and laugh-
ter,

Piping and playing, minstrelsy and masking ;
'Till life fled from us like an idle dream,
A show of mummary without a meaning.
My brother rest and pardon to his soul,
Is gone to his account ; for this his minion,
The revel-rout is done—But you were speaking
Concerning her—I have been told, that you
Are frequent in your visitation to her.

Has. No further, my good lord, than friendly
pity,
And tender-hearted charity allow. [it.

Glos. Go to : I did not mean to chide you for
For, sooth to say, I hold it noble in you
To cherish the distress'd—On with your tale.

Has. Thus it is gracious sir, that certain
officers,

Using the warrant of your mighty name,
With insolence unjust, and lawless power,
Have seiz'd upon the lands, which late she held
By grant, from her great master Edward's
bounty. [heard ;

Glos. Somewhat of this, but slightly have I
And though some counsellors of forward zeal,
Some of most ceremonious sanctity,
And bearded wisdom, often have provok'd
The hand of justice to fall heavy on her ;
Yet still, in kind compassion of her weakness,
And tender memory of Edward's love,
I have withheld the merciless stern law
From doing outrage on her helpless beauty.

Has. Good heav'n, who renders mercy back
for mercy,
With open-handed bounty shall repay you :
This gentle deed shall fairly be set foremost,
To screen the wild escapes of lawless passion
And the long train of frailties flesh is heir to.

Glos. Thus far, the voice of pity pleaded
only :

Our further and more full extent of grace
Is given to your request. Let her attend,
And to ourself deliver up her griefs.
She shall be heard with patience, and each
wrong

At full redress'd. But I have other news,
Which must import us both ; for still my for-
tunes

Go hand in hand with yours ; our common foes,
The queen's relations, our new-fangled gen-
try,

Have fall'n their haughty crests—that for your
privacy. [*Exeunt*, R.H.]

SCENE II.—*An apartment in Jane Shore's House.*

Enter BELMOUR, *and* DUMONT, L.H.

Bel. How she has lived you have heard my
tale already ;
The rest your own attendance in her family,
Where I have found the means this day to place
you,
And nearer observation, best will tell you.
See with what sad and sober cheer she comes.

Enter JANE SHORE, R.H.

Sure, or I read her visage much amiss,
Or grief besets her hard. Save you, fair lady,
The blessings of the cheerful morn be on you,
And greet your beauty with its opening sweets.

Jane S. My gentle neighbour! your good
wishes still [*mour!*]

Pursue my hapless fortunes; ah! good Bel-
How few, like thee, inquire the wretched out,
And court the offices of soft humanity.
Like thee reserve their raiment for the naked,
Reach out their bread to feed the crying orphan,
Or mix their pitying tears with those that weep.
Thy praise deserves a better tongue than mine,
To speak and bless thy name. Is this the gen-
tleman,
Whose friendly service you commended to me?

Bel. Madam, it is !

Jane S. A venerable aspect ! (*Aside.*)

Age sits with decent grace upon his visage,
And worthily becomes his silver locks ;
He wears the marks of many years well spent,
Of virtue, truth well try'd, and wise experience ;
A friend like this would suit my sorrows well.

(*Crosses to Centre.*)

Fortune, I fear me, sir, has meant you ill,
(*To Dum.*)

Who pays your merit with that scanty pittance,
Which my poor hand and humble roof can give.
But to supply those golden vantages,
Which elsewhere you might find, expect to meet
A just regard and value for your worth, [ship
The welcome of a friend, and the free partner-
Of all that little good the world allows me.

Dum. You over rate me much ; and all my
answer

Must be my future truth ; let that speak for me,
And make up my deserving.

Jane S. Are you of England ? [birth :

Dum. No, gracious lady, Flanders claims my
At Antwerp has my constant biding been,
Where sometimes I have known more plente-
ous days

Than these which now my failing age affords.

Jane S. Alas ! at Antwerp ! O forgive my tears !
(*Weeping.*)

They fall for my offences—and must fall
Long, long, ere they shall wash my stains away.
You knew perhaps—O grief ! O shame !—my
husband.

Dum. I knew him well—but stay this flood of anguish.

The senseless grave feels not your pious sorrows :
Three years and more are past, since I was bid,
With many of our common friends, to wait him
To his last peaceful mansion. I attended,
Sprinkled his clay-cold corse with holy drops,
According to our church's rev'rend rite,
And saw him laid, in hallow'd ground, to rest.

Jane S. Oh that my soul had known no joy
but him !

That I had liv'd within his guiltless arms,
And dying slept in innocence beside him !
But now his honest dust abhors the fellowship,
And scorns to mix with mine.

Enter a SERVANT, L.H.

Ser. The lady Alicia
Attends your leisure.

Jane S. Say I wish to see her. [*Exit Servant, L.H.*
Please, gentle sir, one moment to retire,
I'll wait you on the instant, and inform you
Of each unhappy circumstance, in which
Your friendly aid and counsel much may stead me.

[*Bel. and Dum. cross and exeunt, R.H.*

Enter ALICIA, L.H.

Alic. Still my fair friend, still shall I find you
thus ?

Still shall these sighs heave after one another,
These trickling drops chase one another still.
As if the posting messengers of grief

Could overtake the hours fled far away,
And make old time come back ?

Jane S. No, my Alicia,
Heaven and his saints be witness to my thoughts,
There is no hour of all my life o'er past,
That I could wish should take its turn again.

Alic. And yet some of those days my friend
has known,
Some of those years might pass for golden ones,
At least if womankind can judge of happiness.
What could we wish, we who delight in empire,
Whose beauty is our sov'reign good, and gives us,
Our reasons to rebel, and pow'r to reign,
What could we more than to behold a monarch,
Lovely, renown'd, a conquerer, and young,
Bound in our chains, and sighing at our feet ?

Jane S. 'Tis true, the royal Edward was a
wonder,
The goodly pride of all our English youth ;
He was the very joy of all that saw him.
Form'd to delight, to love, and to persuade.
But what had I to do with kings and courts ?
My humble lot had cast me far beneath him ;
And that he was the first of all mankind,
The bravest, and most lovely was my curse.

Alic. Sure something more than fortune join'd
your loves :
Nor could his greatness, and his gracious form,
Be elsewhere match'd so well, as to the sweetness
And beauty of my friend.

Jane S. Name him no more :
He was the bane and ruin of my peace.
This anguish, and these tears, these are the
legacies

His fatal love has left me. Thou wilt see me,
Believe me, my Alicia, thou wilt see me,
Ere yet a few short days pass o'er my head,
Abandon'd to the very utmost wretchedness.
The hand of pow'r has seiz'd almost the whole
Of what was left for needy life's support;
Shortly thou wilt behold me poor, and kneeling
Before thy charitable door for bread

Alic. Joy of my life, my dearest Shore, forbear
To wound my heart with thy foreboding sorrows:
Raise thy sad soul to better hopes than these,
Lift up thy eyes, and let them shine once more,
Bright as the morning sun above the mist.
Exert thy charms, seek out the stern protector,
And sooth his savage temper with thy beauty;
Spate of his deadly, unrelenting nature,
He shall be mov'd to pity, and redress thee.

Jane S My form, alas! has long forgot to
please!

The scene of beauty and delight is chang'd;
No roses bloom upon my fading cheek,
Nor laughing graces wanton in my eyes;
But haggard grief, lean looking, sallow care,
And pining discontent, a rueful train,
Dwell on my brow, all hideous and forlorn;
One only shadow of a hope is left me;
'The noble-minded Hastings, of his goodness,
Has kindly underta'en to be my advocate,
And move my humble suit to angry Gloster.

Alic. Does Hastings undertake to plead your
cause?

But wherefore should he not? Hasting has eyes:
The gentle lord has a right tender heart,
Melting and easy, yielding to impression,

And catching the soft flame from each new
beauty ;

But yours shall charm him long.

Jane S. Away, you flatterer ! (*Crosses to R.H.*)
Nor charge his gen'rous meaning with a weak-
ness,

Which his great soul and virtue must disdain.
Too much of love thy hapless friend has prov'd,
Too many giddy, foolish hours are gone,
And in fantastic measures danc'd away :
May the remaining few know only friendship,
So thou, my dearest, truest, best Alicia,
Vouchsafe to lodge me in thy gentle heart,
A partner there ; I will give up mankind,
Forget the transports of increasing passion,
And all the pangs we feel for its decay.

Alic. Live ! live and reign for ever in my
bosom ; (*Embracing.*)

Safe and unrivall'd there possess thy own ;
And you, the brightest of the stars above,
Ye saints that once were women here below,
Be witness of the truth, the holy friendship,
Which here to this my other self I vow.
If I not hold her nearer to my soul,
Than every other joy the world can give,
Let poverty, deformity, and shame,
Distraction and despair seize me on earth,
Let not my faithless ghost have peace hereafter,
Nor taste the bliss of your celestial fellowship.

Jane S. Yes, thou art true, and only thou art
true ;

Therefore these jewels, once the lavish bounty
Of royal Edward's love, I trust to thee !

Receive this, all that I can call my own,
And let it rest unknown, and safe with thee :
That if the state's injustice should oppress me,
Strip me of all, and turn me out a wanderer,
My wretchedness may find relief from thee,
And shelter from the storm.

Alic. My all is thine ;
One common hazard shall attend us both,
And both be fortunate, or both be wretched.
But let thy fearful doubting heart be still ;
The saints and angels have thee in their charge,
And all things shall be well. Think not, the good,
The gentle deeds of mercy thou hast done,
Shall die forgotten all ; the poor, the prisoner,
The fatherless, the friendless, and the widow,
Who daily owe the bounty of thy hand,
Shall cry to heav'n, and pull a blessing on thee.
Ev'n man, the merciless insulter man,
Man, who rejoices in our sex's weakness,
Shall pity thee, and with unwonted goodness,
Forget thy failings, and record thy praise.

Jane S. Why should I think that man will do
for me,
What yet he never did for wretches like me ?
Mark by what partial justice we are judg'd ;
Such is the fate unhappy women find,
And such the curse entail'd upon our kind,
That man, the lawless libertine, may rove,
Free and unquestion'd through the wilds of love ;
While woman, sense and nature's easy fool,
If poor, weak woman swerve from virtue's rule ;
If, strongly charm'd she leave the thorny way,
And in the softer paths of pleasure stray,

Ruin ensues, reproach and endless shame,
 And one false step entirely damns her fame ;
(Crosses to R.H.)
 In vain with tears the loss she may deplore, }
 In vain look back on what she was before ; }
 She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more. }
[Exeunt, R.H.]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Jane Shore's House.*

Enter ALICIA, R.H.

The drowsy night grows on the world, and now
 The busy craftsmen and the o'er-labour'd hind
 Forget the travail of the day in sleep :
 Care only wakes, and moping pensiveness ;
 With meagre discontented looks they sit,
 And watch the wasting of the midnight taper.
 Such vigils must I keep, so wakes my soul,
 Restless and self tormented ! O false Hastings !
 Thou hast destroy'd my peace.
(Knocking without, L.H.)

What noise is that ?

What visitor is this, who with bold freedom,
 Breaks in upon the peaceful night and rest,
 With such a rude approach ?

Enter a SERVANT, L.H..

Serv. One from the court.

Lord Hastings (as I think), demands my lady.

[Crosses behind, and Exit, R.H.]

Alic. Hastings ! Be still, my heart, and try to
meet him, *[comes.*

With his own arts ! with falsehood—But he

*Enter LORD HASTINGS, speaking to a Servant as
entering, L.H.*

Has. Dismiss my train, and wait alone without.
Alicia here ! Unfortunate encounter
But be it as it may.

Alic. When humbly, thus,
The great descend to visit the afflicted,
When thus, unmindful of their rest, they come
To sooth the sorrows of the midnight mourner,
Comfort comes with them ; like the golden sun,
Dispels the sullen shades with her sweet influ-
ence,

And cheers the melancholy house of care.

Has. 'Tis true I would not over-rate a courtesy,
Nor let the coldness of delay hang on it,
To nip and blast its favour, like a frost ;
But rather chose, at this late hour, to come,
That your fair friend may know I have prevail'd ;
The lord protector has receiv'd her suit,
And means to show her grace.

Alic. My friend ! my lord.

Has. Yes, lady, yours ; none has a right more ample

To task my pow'r than you.

Alic. I want the words,
To pay you back a compliment so courtly ;
But my heart guesses at the friendly meaning,
And wou'dn't die your debtor.

Has. 'Tis well, madam.
But I would see your friend.

Alic. O thou false lord !
I would be mistress of my heaving heart,
Stifle this rising rage, and learn from thee
To dress my face in easy, dull indiff'rence ;
But 'twou'dn't be ; my wrongs will tear their
way,

And rush at once upon thee. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Has. Are you wise ?
Have you the use of reason ? Do you wake ?
What means this raving, this transporting pas-
sion ? [tyrant !

Alic. O thou cool traitor ! thou insulting
Dost thou behold my poor, distracted heart,
Thus rent with agonizing love and rage,
And ask me what it means ? Art thou not false ?
Am I not scorn'd, forsaken, and abandon'd ;
Left, like a common wretch, to shame and in-
famy ;

Giv'n up to be the sport of villains' tongues,
Of laughing parasites, and lewd buffoons ?
And all because my soul has doated on thee
With love, with truth, and tenderness unuttera-
ble ! [love ?

Has. Are these the proofs of tenderness and

These endless quarrels, discontents, and jealousies,

These never-ceasing wailings and complainings,

These furious starts, these whirlwinds of the soul,

Which every other moment rise to madness ?

Alic. What proof, alas ! have I not giv'n of love ?

What have I not abandon'd to thy arms ?

Have I not set at nought my noble birth,

A spotless fame, and an unblemish'd race,

The peace of innocence, and pride of virtue ?

My prodigality has giv'n thee all ;

And now, I've nothing left me to bestow,

You hate the wretched bankrupt you have made.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Has. Why am I thus pursu'd from place to place,

Kept in the view, and cross'd at ev'ry turn ?

In vain I fly, and, like a hunted deer,

Scud o'er the lawns, and hasten to the covert ;

E'er I can reach my safety, you o'ertake me

With the swift malice of some keen reproach,

And drive the winged shaft deep in my heart.

Alic. Hither you fly, and here you seek repose ;

Spite of the poor deceit, your arts are known,

Your pious, charitable, midnight visits.

Has. If you are wise, and prize your peace of mind,

Yet take the friendly counsel of my love ;

Believe me true, nor listen to your jealousy,

Let not that devil, which undoes your sex,

That cursed curiosity seduce you,
 To hunt for needless secrets, which, neglected,
 Shall never hurt your quiet ; but once known,
 Shall sit upon your heart, pinch it with pain,
 And banish the sweet sleep for ever from you.
 Go to—be yet advis'd—

Alic. Dost thou in scorn [tamely
 Preach patience to my rage, and bid me
 Sit like a poor, contented idiot down,
 Nor dare to think thou'st wrong'd me ? Ruin
 seize thee,
 And swift perdition overtake thy treachery.
 Have I the least remaining cause to doubt ?
 Hast thou endeavour'd once to hide thy false-
 hood ? [ness,

To hide it might have spoke some little tender-
 And shown thee half unwilling to undo me :
 But thou disdain'st the weakness of humanity.
 Thy words, and all thy actions, have confess'd it ;
 Ev'n now thy eyes avow it, now they speak,
 And insolently own the glorious villany.

Has. Well then, I own my heart has broke
 your chains.
 Patient I bore the painful bondage long,
 At length my gen'rous love disdains your tyrann-
 ny ;

The bitterness and stings of taunting jealousy,
 Vexatious days, and jarring, joyless nights,
 Have driv'n him forth to seek some safer shel-
 ter,
 Where he may rest his weary wings in peace.

Alic. You triumph ! do ! and with gigantic
 pride

Defy impending vengeance. Heav'n shall wink ;
 No more his arm shall roll the dreadful thunder,
 Nor send his lightnings forth : no more his justice

Shall visit the presuming sons of men,
 But perjury, like thine, shall dwell in safety.

Has. Whate'er my fate decrees for me hereafter,

Be present to me now, my better angel !
 Preserve me from the storm that threatens now,
 And if I have beyond atonement sinn'd,
 Let any other kind of plague o'ertake me,
 So I escape the fury of that tongue.

Alic. Thy prayer is heard—I go (*Crosses to L.H.*)—but know, proud lord,
 Howe'er thou scorn'st the weakness of my sex,
 This feeble hand may find the means to reach thee,

Howe'er sublime in pow'r and greatness plac'd,
 With royal favour guarded round and grac'd ;
 On eagle's wings my rage shall urge her flight,
 And hurl thee headlong from thy topmast height ;

Then, like thy fate, superior will I sit,
 And view thee fall'n, and grov'ling at my feet ;
 See thy last breath with indignation go,
 And tread thee sinking to the shades below.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Has. How fierce a fiend is passion ! With what wildness,

What tyranny untam'd it reigns in woman !
 Unhappy sex ! whose easy, yielding temper
 Gives way to ev'ry appetite alike :

And love in their weak bosoms is a rage
 As terrible as hate, and as destructive.
 But soft ye now—for here comes one, disclaims
 Strife and her wrangling train; of equal elements,
 Without one jarring atom was she form'd,
 And gentleness and joy make up her being.

Enter JANE SHORE, R.H.

Forgive me, fair one, if officious friendship
 Intrudes on your repose, and comes thus late
 To greet you with the tidings of success.
 The princely Gloster has vouchsaf'd your hearing,

To-morrow he expects you at the court;
 There plead your cause, with never-failing
 beauty,

Speak all your griefs, and find a full redress.

Jane S. 'Thus humbly let your lowly servant
 bend. (*Kneeling.*)

Thus let me bow my grateful knee to earth,
 And bless your noble nature for this goodness.

Has. Rise, gentle dame, you wrong my meaning much,

Think me not guilty of a thought so vain,
 To sell my courtesy for thanks like these.

Jane S. 'Tis true, your bounty is beyond my
 speaking:

But though my mouth be dumb, my heart shall
 thank you;

And when it melts before the throne of mercy,
 Mourning and bleeding for my past offences,

My fervent soul shall breathe one pray'r for you,
That heav'n will pay you back, when most you
 need,

The grace and goodness you have shown to me.

Has. If there be aught of merit in my service,
Impute it there, where most 'tis due, —to love ;
Be kind, my gentle mistress, to my wishes,
And satisfy my panting heart with beauty.

Jane S. Alas ! my lord—

Has. Why bend thy eyes to earth ?
Wherefore these looks of heaviness and sorrow ?
Why breathes that sigh, my love ? And where-
 fore falls

This trickling show'r of tears, to stain thy sweet-
 ness ?

Jane S. If pity dwells within your noble breast
(As sure it does), oh, speak not to me thus.

Has. Can I behold thee, and not speak of
 love ?

Ev'n now, thus sadly as thou stand'st before me,
Thus desolate, dejected, and forlorn,
Thy softness steals upon my yielding senses,
Till my soul faints, and sickens with desire ;
How canst thou give this motion to my heart,
And bid my tongue be still ?

Jane S. Cast round your eyes
Upon the high-born beauties of the court ;
Behold, like opening roses, where they bloom,
Sweet to the sense, unsully'd all, and spotless ;
There choose some worthy partner of your
 heart,

To fill your arms and bless your virtuous bed ;
Nor turn your eyes this way.

Has. What means this peevish, this fantastic change ?

Where is thy wonted pleasantness of face,
Thy wonted graces, and thy dimpled smiles ?
Where hast thou lost thy wit and sportive mirth ?
That cheerful heart, which us'd to dance for
ever,

And cast a day of gladness all around thee ?

Jane S. Yes, I will own I merit the reproach ;
And for those foolish days of wanton pride,
My soul is justly humbled to the dust : [me,
All tongues, like yours, are licens'd to upbraid
Still to repeat my guilt, to urge my infamy,
And treat me like that abject thing I have been.

Has. No more of this dull stuff. 'Tis time
enough

To whine and mortify thyself with penance,
The present moment claims more gen'rous use ;
Thy beauty, night and solitude reproach me,
For having talk'd thus long :—come let me
press thee, (Laying hold on her.)

Jane S. Forbear, my lord !—here let me
rather die, (Kneeling.)

And end my sorrows and my shame for ever.

Has. Away with this perverseness ;—'tis too
much.

Nay, if you strive,—'tis monstrous affectation !

(Striving.)

Jane S. Retire ! I beg you leave me—

Has. Thus to coy it !—

With one who knows you too.—

Jane S. For mercy's sake—

Has. Ungrateful woman ! Is it thus to pay
My services ?—

Jane S. Abandon me to ruin,—
Rather than urge me—

Has. This way to your chamber;
(*Pulling her.*)

There if you struggle—

Jane S. Help, O gracious heaven!
Help! Save me! Help! [*Rushes out, R.H.*]

Enter DUMONT, R.H. ; he interposes.

Dum. My lord! for honour's sake—

Has. Hah! What art thou?—Be gone!

Dum. My duty calls me
To my attendance on my mistress here.

Has. Avaunt! base groom:—
At distance wait and know thy office better.

Dum. No, my lord—
The common ties of manhood call me now,
And bid me thus stand up in the defence
Of an oppress'd, unhappy, helpless woman.

Has. And dost thou know me, slave?

Dum. Yes, thou proud lord!
I know thee well; know thee with each advantage
[give thee.]
Which wealth, or pow'r, or noble birth can
I know thee too for one who stains those honours,

And blots a long illustrious line of ancestry,
By poorly daring thus to wrong a woman.

Has. 'Tis wondrous well; I see, my saint-like
dame,
You stand provided of your braves and ruffians,
To man your cause, and bluster in your brothel.

Dum. Take back the foul reproach, unman-
ner'd railer !

Nor urge my rage too far, lest thou shouldst
find

I have as daring spirits in my blood
As thou or any of thy race e'er boasted ;
And though no gaudy titles grac'd my birth,
Yet heav'n that made me honest, made me more
Than ever king did, when he made a lord.

Has. Insolent villain ! henceforth let this
teach thee (*Draws and strikes him.*)

The distance 'twixt a peasant and a prince.

Dum. Nay then, my lord, (*Drawing.*) learn
you by this, how well

An arm resolv'd can guard its master's life.

(*They fight ; Dumont disarms Hastings.*)

Has. Confusion ! baffled by a base-born hind !

Dum. Now, haughty sir, where is our differ-
ence now ?

Your life is in my hand, and did not honour,
The gentleness of blood, and inborn virtue
(Howe'er unworthy I may seem to you,)
Plead in my bosom, I should take the forfeit.
But wear your sword again ; and know, a lord
Oppos'd against a man, is but a man.

Has. Curse on my failing hand ! your better
fortune

Has giv'n you vantage o'er me ; but perhaps
Your triumph may be bought with dear repen-
tance.

[*Exit, L.H.*

Re-enter JANE SHORE, R.H.

Jane S. Alas ! what have you done ? Know
ye the pow'r,
The mightiness that waits upon this lord ?

Dum. Fear not, my worthiest mistress ; 'tis a
cause [sue,
In which heaven's guards shall wait you. O pur-
Pursue the sacred counsels of your soul,
Which urge you on to virtue ;
Assisting angels shall conduct your steps,
Bring you to bliss, and crown your days with
peace.

Jane S. O that my head were laid, my sad
eyes clos'd,
And my cold corse wound in my shroud to rest !
My painful heart will never cease to beat,
Will never know a moment's peace till then.

Dum. Would you be happy, leave this fatal
place ;
Fly from the court's pernicious neighbourhood ;
Where innocence is sham'd, and blushing mo-
desty
Is made the scorner's jest ; where hate, deceit,
And deadly ruin, wear the masks of beauty,
And draw deluded fools with shows of pleasure.

Jane S. Where should I fly, thus helpless and
forlorn,
Of friends, and all the means of life bereft ?

Dum. Belmour, whose friendly care still wakes
to serve you,
Has found you out a little peaceful refuge,

Far from the court and the tumultuous city.
Within an ancient forest's ample verge,
There stands a lonely but a healthful dwelling,
Built for convenience and the use of life :
Around it fallows, meads, and pastures fair,
A little garden, and a limpid brook,
By nature's own contrivance seem'd dispos'd ;
No neighbours, but a few poor simple clowns,
Honest and true, with a well meaning priest :
No faction, or domestic fury's rage,
Did e'er disturb the quiet of that place,
When the contending nobles shook the land
With York and Lancaster's disputed sway.
Your virtue there may find a safe retreat
From the insulting pow'rs of wicked greatness.

Jane S. Can there be so much happiness in
store ?

A cell like that is all my hopes aspire to.
Haste then, and thither let us take our flight,
E'er the clouds gather, and the wintry sky
Descends in storms to intercept our passage.

Dum. Will you then go ? You glad my very
soul.

Banish your fears, cast all your cares on me ;
Plenty and ease, and peace of mind shall wait
you,

And make your latter days of life most happy.
O lady ! but I must not, cannot tell you,
How anxious I have been for all your dangers,
And how my heart rejoices at your safety.
So when the spring renews the flow'ry field,
And warns the pregnant nightingale to build,
She seeks the safest shelter of the wood

Where she may trust her little tuneful brood ;
 Where no rude swains her shady cell may know,
 No serpents climb, nor blasting winds may blow ;
 Fond of the chosen place, she views it o'er,
 Sits there, and wanders through the grove no
 more ;
 Warbling she charms it each returning night,
 And loves it with a mother's dear delight.

[*Exeunt*, R.H.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Court.*

Enter ALICIA, with a paper, R.H.

Alic. This paper to the great protector's hand
 With care and secrecy must be convey'd :
 His bold ambition now avows its aim,
 To pluck the crown from Edward's infant brow,
 And fix it on his own. I know he holds
 My faithless Hastings adverse to his hopes,
 And much devoted to the orphan king :
 On that I build ; this paper meets his doubts,
 And marks my hated rival as the cause
 Of Hastings' zeal for his dead master's sons.
 Oh, jealousy ! thou bane of pleasing friendship,

How does thy rancour poison all our softness,
 And turn our gentle nature's into bitterness!
 See, where she comes! once my heart's dearest
 blessing, [ty
 Now my chang'd eyes are blasted with her beau-
 Loath that known face, and sicken to behold her.

Enter JANE SHORE, L.H.

Jane S. O my Alicia!

Alic. What new grief is this?

What unforeseen misfortune has surpris'd thee,
 That racks thy tender heart thus?

Jane S. O Dumont!

Alic. Say, what of him?

Jane S. That friendly, honest man,
 Whom Belmour brought of late to my assistance,
 On whose kind care, whose diligence and faith,
 My surest trust was built, this very morn
 Was seiz'd on by the cruel hand of power,
 Forc'd from my house, and borne away to prison.

Alic. To prison, said you? Can you guess the
 cause?

Jane S. Too well, I fear. His bold defence of
 me [him.

Has drawn the vengeance of Lord Hastings on

Alic. Lord Hastings! ha!

Jane S. Some fitter time must tell thee
 The tale of my hard hap. Upon the present
 Hang all my poor, my last remaining hopes.
 Within this paper is my suit contain'd;
 Here as the princely Gloster passes forth,
 I wait to give it on my humble knees,

And move him for redress.

(*She gives the paper to Alicia, who opens and seems to read it ; Jane Shore retires up the Stage.*)

Alic. Now for a wile,

To sting my thoughtless rival to the heart ;

To blast her fatal beauties, and divide her

For ever from my perjur'd Hastings' eyes :

Their fashions are the same, it cannot fail

(*Aside.—Pulling out the other Paper.*)

Jane S. (Advancing.) But see the great protector comes this way.

Give me the paper, friend

Alic. For love and vengeance !

(*Aside.—She gives her the other Paper.*)

Enter the DUKE of GLOSTER, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFF, CATESBY, Courtiers, and other Attendants, R.H. U.E.

Jane S. (Kneeling, R.H.) O noble Gloster, turn thy gracious eye,

Incline thy pitying ear to my complaint ;

A poor, undone, forsaken, helpless woman,

Entreats a little bread for charity, [ishing.

To feed her wants, and save her life from per-

Gios. Arise fair dame, and dry your wat'ry eyes.

(*Receiving the Paper, and raising her.*)

Beshrew me, but 'twere pity of his heart

That could refuse a boon to such a suitress.

You've got a noble friend to be your advocate :

A worthy and right gentle lord he is,

And to his trust most true. This present now

Some matters of the state detain our leisure ;
 Those once dispatch'd, we'll call for you anon,
 And give your griefs redress. Go to !—be comforted. [this pity,

Jane S. Good heavens repay your highness for
 And show'r down blessings on your princely
 head !

Come, my Alicia, reach thy friendly arm,
 And help me to support this feeble frame,
 That nodding totters with oppressive woe,
 And sinks beneath its load.

[*Exeunt Jane S. and Alic.* R.H.

Glos. Now by my holidame !
 Heavy of heart she seems, and sore afflicted.
 But thus it is when rude calamity
 Lays its strong gripe upon these mincing minions ;
 The dainty gew-gaw forms dissolve at once,
 And shiver at the shock. What says this paper ?
 (*Seeming to read.*)

Ha ! What is this ? Come nearer, Ratcliffe !
 Catesby ! [ing.

Mark the contents, and then divine the mean-
 (*He reads.*)

*Wonder not, Princely Gloster, at the notice
 This paper brings you from a friend unknown ;
 Lord Hastings is inclined to call you master,
 And kneel to Richard as to England's king ;
 But Shore's bewitching wife misleads his heart,
 And draws his service to king Edward's sons :
 Drive her away, you break the charm that holds him,
 And he, and all his powers, attend on you.*

Sir R. (L.H.) 'Tis wonderful !

Cates. (L.H.) The means by which it came
Yet stranger too !

Glos. You saw it giv'n, but now.

Sir R. She could not know the purport.

Glos. No, 'tis plain

She knows it not, it levels at her life ; [ters,
Should she presume to prate of such high mat-
The meddling harlot, dear she should abide it.

Cates. What hand soe'er it comes from, be
assur'd,

It means your highness well—

Glos. Upon the instant,

Lord Hastings will be here ; this morn I mean
To prove him to the quick ; then if he flinch,
No more but this,—away with him at once,
He must be mine or nothing.—But he comes !
Draw nearer this way, and observe me well.

(*They whisper.*)

Enter LORD HASTINGS, L.H.

Has. This foolish woman hangs about my
heart,

Lingers and wanders in my fancy still ;
This coyness is put on, 'tis art and cunning,
And worn to urge desire ;—I must possess her.
The groom, who lift his saucy hand against me,
Ere this, is humbled, and repents his daring.
Perhaps, ev'n she may profit by th' example,
And teach her beauty not to scorn my pow'r.

Glos. This do, and wait me e'er the council sits.

[*Exeunt Ratcliffe and Catesby, R.H. U.E.*

My lord, you're well encounter'd ; here has been

A fair petitioner this morning with us ;
 Believe me, she has won me much to pity her :
 Alas ! her gentle nature was not made
 To buffet with adversity. I told her
 How worthily her cause you had befriended ;
 How much for your good sake we meant to do,
 'That you had spoke, and all things should be well.

Has. Your highness binds me ever to your
 service.

Glos. You know your friendship is most po-
 tent with us,

And shares our power. But of this enough,
 For we have other matters for your ear ;
 The state is out of tune : distracting fears,
 And jealous doubts, jar in our public councils ;
 Amidst the wealthy city, murmurs rise,
 Lewd railings, and reproach on those that rule,
 With open scorn of government ; hence credit,
 And public trust 'twixt man and man, are broke.
 The golden streams of commerce are withheld,
 Which fed the wants of needy hinds and artizans,
 Who therefore curse the great, and threat re-
 bellion

Has. The resty knaves are over-run with ease,
 As plenty ever is the nurse of faction ;
 If in good days, like these, the headstrong herd
 Grow madly wanton and repine, it is
 Because the reins of power are held too slack,
 And reverend authority of late
 Has worn a face of mercy more than justice.

Glos. Beshrew my heart ; but you have well
 divin'd

The source of these disorders. Who can wonder

If riot and misrule o'erturn the realm,
 When the crown sits upon a baby brow ?
 Plainly to speak, hence comes the gen'ral cry,
 And sum of all complaint : 'twill ne'er be well
 With England (thus they talk,) while children
 govern.

Has. 'Tis true, the king is young : but what
 of that ?

We feel no want of Edward's riper years,
 While Gloster's valour and most princely wisdom
 So well support our infant sovereign's place,
 His youth's support, and guardian to his throne.

Glos. The council (much I'm bound to thank
 'em for't,)

Have plac'd a pageant sceptre in my hand,
 Barren of pow'r, and subject to controul ;
 Scorn'd by my foes, and useless to my friends.
 Oh, worthy lord ! were mine the rule indeed,
 I think I should not suffer rank offence
 At large to lord it in the commonweal ;
 Nor would the realm be rent by discord thus,
 Thus fear and doubt, betwixt disputed titles.

Has. Of this I am to learn ; as not supposing
 A doubt like this ;—

Glos. Ay, marry, but there is—
 And that of much concern. Have you not heard
 How, on a late occasion, doctor Shaw
 Has mov'd the people much about the lawfulness
 Of Edward's issue ? By right grave authority
 Of learning and religion, plainly proving,
 A bastard scion never should be grafted
 Upon a royal stock ; from thence at full
 Discoursing on my brother's former contract

To lady Elizabeth Lucy, long before
His jolly match with that same buxom widow,
The queen he left behind him—

Has. Ill befall

Such meddling priests, who kindle up confusion,
And vex the quiet world with their vain scruples !
By heav'n 'tis done in perfect spite to peace.

Did not the king

Our royal master, Edward, in concurrence
With his estates assembled, well determine
What course the sov'reign rule should take
henceforward ?

When shall the deadly hate of faction cease ?

When shall our long divided land have rest,

If every peevish, moody malcontent,

Shall set the senseless rabble in an uproar,

Fright them with dangers, and perplex their
brains,

Each day with some fantastic giddy change ?

Glos. What if some patriot, for the public good,
Should vary from your scheme, new-mould the
state ?

Has. Curse on the innovating hand attempts it !
Remember him, the villain, righteous heaven,
In thy great day of vengeance ! blast the traitor
And his pernicious counsels ; who, for wealth,
For pow'r, the pride of greatness, or revenge,
Would plunge his native land in civil wars !

Glos. You go too far, my lord.

Has. Your highness' pardon.—

Have we so soon forgot those days of ruin,
When York and Lancaster drew forth their bat-
tles ;

When, like a matron butcher'd by her sons,
 Our groaning country bled at every vein :
 When murders, rapes, and massacres prevail'd ;
 When churches, palaces, and cities blaz'd ;
 When insolence and barbarism triumph'd,
 And swept away distinction : peasants trod
 Upon the necks of nobles : low were laid
 'The reverend crosier and the holy mitre,
 And desolation covered all the land ;
 Who can remember this, and not, like me,
 Here vow to sheath a dagger in his heart,
 Whose damn'd ambition would renew those
 horrors,

And set once more that scene of blood before us ?

Glos. How now ! so hot !

Has. So brave, and so resolv'd.

Glos. Is then our friendship of so little moment,
 That you could arm your hand against my life ?

Has. I hope your highness does not think I
 mean it ;

No, heav'n forfend that e'er your princely person
 Should come within the scope of my resentment.

Glos. O noble Hastings ! nay, I must embrace
 you ; (*Embraces him.*)

By holy Paul, you're a right honest man !
 The time is full of danger and distrust,
 And warns us to be wary. Hold me not
 Too apt for jealousy and light surmise,
 If when I meant to lodge you next my heart,
 I put your truth to trial. Keep your loyalty,
 And live your king and country's best support :
 For me, I ask no more than honour gives,
 To think me yours. and rank me with your
 friends. [*Exit, R.H.*

Has. I am not read,
Nor skill'd and practis'd in the arts of greatness,
To kindle thus, and give a scope to passion.
The duke is surely noble; but he touch'd me
Ev'n on the tend'rest point; the master string
That makes most harmony or discord to me.
I own the glorious subject fires my breast,
And my soul's darling passion stands confess'd;
Beyond or love's or friendship's sacred band,
Beyond myself, I prize my native land:
On this foundation would I build my fame,
And emulate the Greek and Roman name;
Think England's peace bought cheaply with my
blood,
And die with pleasure for my country's good.

[*Exit, R.H.*

Marry, at last, the testy gentleman
Was almost mov'd to bid us bold defiance :
But there I dropp'd the argument, and changing
The first design and purport of my speech,
I prais'd his good affection to young Edward,
And left him to believe my thoughts like his.
Proceed we then in this fore-mentioned matter,
As nothing bound or trusting to his friendship.

Sir R. Ill does it thus befall. I could have
wish'd

This lord had stood with us.

His name had been of 'vantage to your highness,
And stood our present purpose much in stead.

Glos. This wayward and perverse declining
from us,

Has warrant'd at full the friendly notice,
Which we this morn receiv'd. I hold it certain,
This puling, whining harlot rules his reason,
And prompts his zeal for Edward's bastard brood.

Cates. If she have such dominion o'er his heart,
And turn it at her will, you rule her fate ;
And should, by inference and apt deduction,
Be arbiter of his. Is not her bread,
'The very means immediate to her being,
'The bounty of your hand ? Why does she live,
If not to yield obedience to your pleasure,
'To speak, to act, to think as you command !

Sir R. Let her instruct her tongue to bear
your message !

Teach every grace to smile in your behalf,
And her deluded eyes to gloat for you ;
His ductile reason will be wound about.

Be led and turn'd again, say and unsay,
Receive the yoke, and yield exact obedience.

Glos. Your counsel likes me well, it shall be
follow'd,

She waits without attending, on her suit,
Go, call her in, and leave us here alone.

[*Exeunt Ratcliffe and Catesby, L.H.*]

How poor a thing is he, how worthy scorn,
Who leaves the guidance of imperial manhood
To such a paltry piece of stuff as this is!
A moppet made of prettiness and pride;
That oftener does her giddy fancies change,
Than glittering dew-drops in the sun do colours.—
Now, shame upon it! was our reason given
For such a use? To be thus puff'd about.
Sure there is something more than witchcraft in
them,
That masters ev'n the wisest of us all.

Enter JANE SHORE, L.H.

Oh! you are come most fitly. We have ponder'd
On this your grievance: and though some there
are, [force
Nay, and those great ones too, who would en-
The rigour of our power to afflict you,
And bear a heavy hand; yet fear not you:
We've ta'en you to our favour; our protection
Shall stand between, and shield you from mishap.

Jane S. The blessings of a heart with anguish
broken

And rescu'd from despair, attend your highness.
Alas! my gracious lord, what have I done

To kindle such relentless wrath against me ?

Glos. Marry, there are, though I believe them
Who say you meddle in affairs of state : [not
That you presume to prattle like a busy-body,
Give your advice, and teach the lords o'the
What fits the order of the commonweal. [council

Jane S. Oh, that the busy world, at least in
this,

Would take example from a wretch like me !
None then would waste their hours in foreign
thoughts, [peace,
Forget themselves, and what concerns their
To search, with prying eyes, for faults abroad,
If all, like me, consider'd their own hearts,
And wept their sorrows which they found at
home. [I trust not

Glos. Go to ; I know your pow'r ; and though
To ev'ry breath of fame, I'm not to learn
That Hastings is profess'd your loving vassal.
But fair befall your beauty : use it wisely,
And it may stand your fortunes much in stead,
Give back your forfeit land with large increase,
And place you high in safety and in honour.
Nay, I could point a way, the which pursuing,
You shall not only bring yourself advantage,
But give the realm much worthy cause to thank
you. [hand

Jane S. Oh ! where or how—can my unworthy
Become an instrument of good to any ?
Instruct your lowly slave, and let me fly
To yield obedience to your dread command.

Glos. Why, that's well said ;—Thus then,—
observe me well.

The state, for many high and potent reasons,
Deeming my brother Edward's sons unfit
For the imperial weight of England's crown—

Jane S. Alas ! for pity.

Glos. Therefore have resolv'd
To set aside their unavailing infancy,
And vest the sov'reign rule in abler hands.
This, though of great importance to the public,
Hastings, for very peevishness and spleen,
Does stubbornly oppose.

Jane S. Does he ? Does Hastings ?

Glos. Ay, Hastings. [heav'n's :

Jane S. Reward him for the noble deed, just
For this one action guard him and distinguish him
With signal mercies, and with great deliverance.
Save him from wrong, adversity, and shame,
Let never fading honours flourish round him,
And consecrate his name, ev'n to time's end.

Glos. How now !

Jane S. The poor, forsaken, royal little ones !
Shall they be left a prey to savage power ?
Can they lift up their harmless hands in vain,
Or cry to heaven for help, and not be heard ?
Impossible ! O gallant, generous Hastings,
Go on, pursue, assert the sacred cause :
Stand forth thou proxy of all-ruling Providence,
And save the friendless infants from oppression.
Saints shall assist thee with prevailing prayers,
And warring angels combat on thy side.

(Crosses to R.H.)

Glos. You're passing rich in this same heav'nly
speech, [me !

And spend it at your pleasure. Nay, but mark

My favour is not bought with words like these.
Go to :—you'll teach your tongue another tale.

Jane S. No, though the royal Edward has undone me,

He was my king, my gracious master still ;
He lov'd me too, though 'twas a guilty flame ;
And can I ?—O my heart abhors the thought !
Stand by and see his children robb'd of right ?

Glos. Dare not, ev'n for thy soul, to thwart
me further ! [foolery ;

None of your arts, your feigning, and your
Your dainty squeamish coying it to me ;
Go—to your lord, your paramour, be gone !
Lisp in his ear, hang wanton on his neck,
And play your monkey gambols o'er to him.
You know my purpose, look that you pursue it,
And make him yield obedience to my will,
Do it,—or woe upon the harlot's head.

Jane S. Oh that my tongue had every grace
of speech,

Great and commanding, as the breath of kings ;
That I had art and eloquence divine,
To pay my duty to my master's ashes, [cence.
And plead, till death, the cause of injur'd inno-

Glos. Ha ! Dost thou brave me, minion ! Dost
thou know [make thee ?

How vile, how very a wretch, my pow'r can
That I can place thee in such abject state,
As help shall never find thee ; where, repining,
Thou shalt sit down, and gnaw the earth for
anguish ;

Groan to the pitiless winds without return :
Howl, like the midnight wolf amidst the desert,
And curse thy life, in bitterness and misery !

Jane S. Let me be branded for the public
 scorn, [bond,
 Turn'd forth and driv'n to wander like a vaga-
 Be friendless and forsaken, seek my bread
 Upon the barren wild and desolate waste,
 Feed on my sighs, and drink my falling tears,
 E'er I consent to teach my lips injustice,
 Or wrong the orphan, who has none to save him.

Glos. 'Tis well :—we'll try the temper of your
 What, hoa ! Who waits without ? [heart.

Enter RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, and Attendants, L.H.

Glos. Go, some of you, and turn this strumpet
 forth !
 Spurn her into the street ; there let her perish,
 And rot upon a dunghill. Through the city
 See it proclaim'd, that none, on pain of death,
 Presume to give her comfort, food, or harbour ;
 Who ministers the smallest comfort, dies.
 Her house, her costly furniture and wealth,
 We seize on, for the profit of the state.
 Away ! Be gone !

Jane S. Oh thou most righteous Judge—
 Humbly behold, I bow myself to thee, (*Kneels.*)
 And own thy justice in this hard decree :
 No longer, then, my ripe offences spare,
 But what I merit, let me learn to bear.
 Yet, since 'tis all my wretchedness can give,
 For my past crimes my forfeit life receive ;
 (*They raise her.*)

No pity for my sufferings here I crave,
 And only hope forgiveness in the grave.

[*Exit Jane Shore, guarded by Catesby, L.H.*

Glos. So much for this. Your project's at an
end. (To Sir Richard.)

This idle toy, this hilding scorns my power,
And sets us all at nought. See that a guard
Be ready at my call—

Sir R. The council waits
Upon your highness's leisure.

Glos. I'll attend them. [Exeunt, L.H.]

SCENE II.—*The Council Chamber.*

*The DUKE of BUCKINGHAM, EARL of DERBY,
BISHOP of ELY, LORD HASTINGS, and others,
discovered in Council. The DUKE of GLOSTER
enters, L.H. and takes his Place at the
upper End.*

Der. (R.H.) In happy times we are assembled
here,—

T' point the day, and fix the solemn pomp
For placing England's crown, with all due rites,
Upon our sovereign Edward's youthful brow.

Lord H. (L.H.) Some busy, meddling knaves,
'tis said there are,

As such will still be prating, who presume
To carp and cavil at his royal right;
Therefore, I hold it fitting, with the soonest,
T' appoint the order of the coronation :
So to approve our duty to the king,
And stay the babbling of such vain gainsayers.

Der. We all attend to know your highness'
pleasure. (To Gloster.)

Glos. (In Centre.) My lords, a set of worthy
men you are,

Prudent and just, and careful for the state ;
 Therefore, to your most grave determination
 I yield myself in all things ; and demand
 What punishment your wisdom shall think meet
 T' inflict upon those damnable contrivers,
 Who shall with potions, charms, and witching
 Practise against our person and our life ! [drugs,

Has. So much I hold the king your highness'
 debtor,

So precious are you to the commonweal,
 That I presume, not only for myself,
 But in behalf of these, my noble brothers,
 To say, whoe'er they be, they merit death.

Glos. Then judge yourselves, convince your
 eyes of truth :

Behold my arm, thus blasted, dry and wither'd,
(*Pulling up his Sleeve.*)

Shrunk like a foul abortion, and decay'd,
 Like some untimely product of the seasons,
 Robb'd of its properties of strength and office.
 This is the sorcery of Edward's wife,
 Who, in conjunction with that harlot Shore,
 And other like confederate midnight hags,
 By force of potent spells, of bloody characters,
 And conjurations horrible to hear,
 Call fiends and spectres from the yawning deep,
 And set the ministers of hell at work,
 To torture and despoil me of my life.

Has. If they have done this deed—

Glos. If they have done it !

Talk'st thou to me of ifs, audacious traitor !
 Thou art that strumpet witch's chief abettor,
 The patron and comploter of her mischiefs,

And join'd in this contrivance for my death.
 Nay start not, lords.—What ho! a guard there,
 sirs!

Enter Guards, L.H.

Lord Hastings, I arrest thee of high treason.
 Seize him, and bear him instantly away.
 He sha' not live an hour. By holy Paul,
 I will not dine before his head be brought me.
 Ratcliffe, stay you, and see that it be done:
 The rest that love me, rise and follow me.

[Exeunt, Gloster, R.H. the Lords following.]

Manet LORD HASTINGS, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE,
and Guards.

Has. What! and no more but this!—How!
 to the scaffold!

O gentle Ratcliffe! tell me, do I hold thee?
 Or if I dream, what shall I do to wake, [fusion?
 To break, to struggle through this dread con-
 For surely death itself is not so painful
 As is this sudden horror and surprise.

Sir R. (L.H.) You heard the duke's commands
 to me were absolute.

Therefore, my lord, address you to your shrift,
 With all good speed you may. Summon your
 courage,

And be yourself; for you must die this instant.

Has. Yes, Ratcliffe, I will take thy friendly
 counsel,

And die as a man should; 'tis somewhat hard.

To call my scatter'd spirits home at once :
 But since what must be, must be ;—let necessity
 Supply the place of time and preparation,
 And arm me for the blow 'Tis but to die,
 'Tis but to venture on the common hazard,
 Which many a time in battle I have run ;
 'Tis but to close my eyes and shut out day-light,
 To view no more the wicked ways of men,
 No longer to behold the tyrant Gloster,
 And be a weeping witness of the woes,
 The desolation, slaughter, and calamities,
 Which he shall bring on this unhappy land.

Enter ALICIA, L.H.

Alic. Stand off, and let me pass :—I will, I must
 Catch him once more in these despairing arms,
 And hold him to my heart —O Hastings ! Hastings !

Has. Alas ! why com'st thou at this dreadful
 moment

To fill me with new terrors, new distractions ;
 To turn me wild with thy distemper'd rage,
 And shock the peace of my departing soul ?
 Away ; I pr'ythee, leave me !

Alic. Stop a minute—
 Till my full griefs find passage ;—O the tyrant !
 Perdition fall on Gloster's head and mine.

Has. What means thy frantic grief ?

Alic. I cannot speak—
 But I have murder'd thee ;—Oh, I could tell thee !

Has. Speak, and give ease to thy conflicting
 passion !

Be quick, nor keep me longer in suspense,
 Time presses, and a thousand crowding thoughts
 Break in at once! this way and that they snatch;
 They tear my hurry'd soul: all claim attention,
 And yet not one is heard. Oh! speak, and
 leave me,

For I have business would employ an age,
 And but a minute's time to get it done in.

Alic. That, that's my grief;—'tis I that urge
 thee on, [earth,
 Thus hunt thee to the toil, sweep thee from
 And drive thee down this precipice of fate.

Has. Thy reason is grown wild. Could thy
 weak hand
 Bring on this mighty ruin? If it could,
 What have I done so grievous to thy soul,
 So deadly, so beyond the reach of pardon,
 That nothing but my life can make atonement?

Alic. Thy cruel scorn hath stung me to the
 heart,
 And set my burning bosom all in flames;
 Raving and mad I flew to my revenge,
 And writ I know not what;—told the protector,
 That Shore's detested wife, by wiles, had won
 thee
 To plot against his greatness.—He believ'd it,
 (Oh, dire event of my pernicious counsel!)
 And, while I meant destruction on her head,
 He has turn'd it all on thine.

Has. O thou inhuman! Turn thy eyes away,
 And blast me not with their destructive beams:
 Why should I curse thee with my dying breath?
 Be gone! and let me die in peace.

(Crosses to L.H.)

Alic. Canst thou—O cruel Hastings, leave me thus ?

Hear me, I beg thee,—I conjure thee, hear me !
While with an agonizing heart, I swear,
By all the pangs I feel, by all the sorrows,
The terrors and despair thy loss shall give me,
My hate was on my rival bent alone.
Oh ! had I once divin'd, false as thou art,
A danger to thy life, I would have died,
I would have met it for thee.

Has. Now mark ! and tremble at heaven's
just award :

While thy insatiate wrath and fell revenge,
Pursu'd the innocence which never wrong'd
thee,
Behold, the mischief falls on thee and me :
Remorse and heaviness of heart shall wait thee,
And everlasting anguish be thy portion :
For me, the snares of death are wound about me,
And now, in one poor moment, I am gone.
Oh ! if thou hast one tender thought remaining,
Fly to thy closet, fall upon thy knees,
And recommend my parting soul to mercy.

Alic. Oh ! yet, before I go for ever from thee,
Turn thee in gentleness and pity to me,
(*Kneeling.*)

And, in compassion of my strong affliction,
Say, is it possible you can forgive
The fatal rashness of ungovern'd love ?
For, oh ! 'tis certain, if I had not lov'd thee
Beyond my peace, my reason, fame, and life,
This day of horror never would have known us.

Has. Oh, rise, and let me hush thy stormy sorrows. (*Raising her.*)

Assuage thy tears, for I will chide no more,
No more upbraid thee, thou unhappy fair one.
I see the hand of heav'n is arm'd against me ;
And, in mysterious providence, decrees
To punish me by thy mistaken hand. [thee,
Most righteous doom ! for, oh, while I behold
Thy wrongs rise up in terrible array,
And charge thy ruin on me ; thy fair fame,
Thy spotless beauty, innocence, and youth,
Dishonour'd, blasted, and betray'd by me.

Alic. And does thy heart relent for my undoing ?

Oh ! that inhuman Gloster could be mov'd,
But half so easily as I can pardon !

(*Catesby enters, R.H.—Whispers Ratcliffe.*)

Has. Here, then, exchange we mutual forgiveness :

So may the guilt of all my broken vows,
My perjuries to thee, be all forgotten,
As here my soul acquits thee of my death,
As here I part without one angry thought,
As here I leave thee with the softest tenderness,
Mourning the chance of our disastrous loves,
And begging heav'n to bless and to support thee.

Sir R. (L.H.) My lord, dispatch ; the duke
has sent to chide me,
For loitering in my duty—

Has. I obey.

Alic. Insatiate, savage monster ! Is a moment
So tedious to thy malice ? Oh, repay him,
Thou great avenger ! Give him blood for blood :

Guilt haunt him ! fiends pursue him ! lightnings
blast him !

That he may know how terrible it is
To want that moment he denies thee now.

Has. This rage is all in vain, that tears thy
bosom :

Retire, I beg thee ; [wounds me ;
To see thee thus, thou know'st not how it
Thy agonies are added to my own,
And make the burden more than I can bear.
Farewell :—good angels visit thy afflictions,
And bring thee peace and comfort from above.

[*Exit, L.H.*

Alic. Oh ! stab me to the heart, some pitying
hand,
Now strike me dead—

Re-enter LORD HASTINGS, L.H.

Has. One thing I had forgot ;—
I charge thee, by our present common miseries ;
By our past loves, if they have yet a name ;
By all thy hopes of peace here and hereafter,
Let not the rancour of thy hate pursue
The innocence of thy unhappy friend ;
Thou know'st who 'tis I mean ; Oh ! shouldst
thou wrong her,
Just heav'n shall double all thy woes upon thee,
And make 'em know no end ;—remember this,
As the last warning of a dying man.
Farewell, for ever !

(*The Guards carry Hastings off, L.H.*)

Alic. For ever ! Oh, for ever !
Oh, who can bear to be a wretch for ever !

My rival, too ! His last thoughts hung on her,
 And, as he parted, left a blessing for her :
 Shall she be blest, and I be curst, for ever ;
 No ; since her fatal beauty was the cause
 Of all my suff'rings, let her share my pains ;
 Let her, like me, of ev'ry joy forlorn,
 Devote the hour when such a wretch was born ;
 Cast ev'ry good, and ev'ry hope behind ;
 Detest the works of nature, loathe mankind :
 Like me, with cries distracted, fill the air,
 'Tear her poor bosom, rend her frantic hair,
 And prove the torments of the last despair. }
[Exit, R.H.]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter BELMOUR and DUMONT, L.H.

Dum. You saw her, then ?

Bel. I met her, as returning,
 In solemn penance from the public cross.
 Before her, certain rascal officers,
 Slaves in authority, the knaves of justice,
 Proclaim'd the tyrant Gloster's cruel orders.
 Around her, numberless, the rabble flow'd,

Should'ring each other, crowding for a view,
Gaping and gazing, taunting and reviling ;
Some pitying,—but those, alas ! how few !
The most, such iron hearts we are, and such
The base barbarity of human kind,
With insolence and lewd reproach pursu'd her,
Hooting and railing, and with villanous hands
Gath'ring the filth from out the common ways,
To hurl upon her head.

Dum. Inhuman dogs !

How did she bear it ?

Bel. With the gentlest patience ;
Submissive, sad, and, lowly was her look ;
A burning taper in her hand she bore,
And on her shoulders carlessly confus'd,
With loose neglect, her lovely tresses hung ;
Upon her cheek a faintish blush was spread ;
Feeble she seem'd, and sorely smit with pain.
While barefoot as she trod the flinty pavement,
Her footsteps all along were mark'd with blood.
Yet, silent still she pass'd and unrepining ;
Her streaming eyes bent ever on the earth,
Except when in some bitter pang of sorrow,
To heav'n she seem'd in fervent zeal to raise,
And beg that mercy man deny'd her here.

Dum. When was this pitious sight ?

Bel. These last two days.

You know my care was wholly bent on you,
To find the happy means of your deliverance,
Which but for Hastings' death I had not gain'd.
During that time, although I have not seen her,
Yet divers trusty messengers I've sent,
To wait about, and watch a fit convenience

To give her some relief, but all in vain ;
A churlish guard attends upon her steps,
Who menace those with death, that bring comfort,
And drive all succour from her.

Dum. Let 'em threaten ;
Let proud oppression prove its fiercest malice ;
So heav'n befriend my soul, as here I vow
To give her help, and share one fortune with
her.

Bel. Mean you to see her thus, in your own
form ?

Dum. I do. [quence ?

Bel. And have you thought upon the conse-

Dum. What is there I should fear ?

Bel. Have you examin'd
Into your inmost heart, and try'd at leisure
The sev'ral secret springs that move the pas-
sions ?

Has mercy fix'd her empire there so sure,
That wrath and vengeance never may return ?
Can you resume a husband's name, and bid
That wakeful dragon, fierce resentment, sleep ?

Dum. O thou hast set my busy brain at work,
And now she musters up a train of images,
Which, to preserve my peace, I had cast aside,
And sunk in deep oblivion.—Oh, that form !
That angel face on which my dotage hung !
How I have gaz'd upon her, till my soul
With very eagerness went forth towards her,
And issu'd at my eyes.—Was there a gem
Which the sun ripens in the Indian mine,
Or the rich bosom of the ocean yields ?

What was there art could make, or wealth
 could buy,
 Which I have left unsought to deck her beauty?
 What could her king do more?—And yet she fled.

Bel. Away with that sad fancy—

Dum. Oh, that day!

The thought of it must live for ever with me.
 I met her, Belmour, when the royal spoiler
 Bore her in triumph from my widow'd home!
 Within his chariot, by his side she sat,
 And listen'd to his talk with downward looks,
 'Till sudden as she chanc'd aside to glance,
 Her eyes encountered mine;—Oh! then, my
 friend!

Oh! who can paint my grief and her amazement!
 As at the stroke of death, twice turn'd she pale;
 And twice a burning crimson blush'd all o'er her;
 Then, with a shriek heart-wounding, loud she
 cry'd,

While down her cheeks two gushing torrents ran
 Fast falling on her hands, which thus she
 wrung:—

Mov'd at her grief, the tyrant ravisher,
 With courteous action woo'd her oft to turn;
 Earnest he seem'd to plead, but all in vain;
 Ev'n to the last she bent her sight towards me,
 And follow'd me,—till I had lost myself.

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Bel. Alas, for pity! Oh! those speaking tears!
 Could they be false? Did she not suffer with you.
 For though the king by force possess'd her
 person,
 Her unconsenting heart dwelt still with you?

If all her former woes were not enough,
 Look on her now; behold her where she wanders,
 Hunted to death, distress'd on every side,
 With no one hand to help; and tell me then,
 If ever misery were known like hers?

Dum. And can she bear it? Can that delicate
 frame

Endure the beating of a storm so rude?
 Can she, for whom the various seasons chang'd
 To court her appetite and crown her board,
 For whom the foreign vintages were press'd,
 For whom the merchant spread his silken stores,
 Can she—

Entreat for bread, and want the needful raiment
 To wrap her shiv'ring bosom from the weather?
 When she was mine, no care came ever nigh
 her; [spring,

I thought the gentlest breeze that wakes the
 Too rough to breathe upon her; cheerfulness
 Danc'd all the day before her, and at night
 Soft slumbers waited on her downy pillow:—
 Now, sad and shelterless, perhaps she lies,
 Where piercing winds blow sharp, and the chill
 rain [head,

Drops from some pent-house on her wretched
 Drenches her locks, and kills her with the cold.
 It is too much:—hence with her past offences,
 They are aton'd at full.—Why stay we then?
 Oh! let us haste, my friend, and find her out.

Bel. Somewhere about this quarter of the
 town,
 I hear the poor abandon'd creature lingers:

Her guard, though set with strictest watch to keep
 All food and friendship from her, yet permit her
 'To wander in the streets, there choose her bed,
 And rest her head on what cold stone she pleases.

Dum. Here then let us divide ; each in his
 round

To search her sorrows out ; whose hap it is
 First to behold her, this way let him lead
 Her fainting steps, and meet we here together.
 [Exeunt R.H.]

SCENE II.—A Street.

*Enter JANE SHORE, L.H.U.E. her Hair hanging loose
 on her Shoulders, and bare-footed.*

Jane S. Yet, yet endure, nor murmur, O my
 soul ! [berless ?]

For are not thy transgressions great and num-
 Do they not cover thee like rising floods,
 And press thee like a weight of waters down ?
 Wait then with patience, till the circling hours
 Shall bring the time of thy appointed rest,
 And lay thee down in death. [me,
 And, hark ! methinks the roar that late pursu'd
 Sinks like the murmurs of a falling wind,
 And softens into silence. Does revenge
 And malice then grow weary, and forsake me ?
 My guard, too, that observ'd me still so close,
 Tire in the task of their inhuman office,
 And loiter far behind. Alas ! I faint,
 My spirits fail at once.—This is the door
 Of my Alicia ;—blessed opportunity !

I'll steal a little succour from her goodness,
Now while no eye observes me.

(*She knocks at R.H.D.*)

Enter SERVANT, R.H.D.

Is your lady,
My gentle friend, at home ! Oh ! bring me to her.
(*Going in.*)

Serv. Hold, mistress, whither would you ?
(*Throwing her back.*)

Jane S. Do you not know me ! [too :

Serv. I know you well, and know my orders
You must not enter here ;—

Jane S. Tell my Alicia,
'Tis I would see her.

Serv. She is ill at ease,
And will admit no visitor.

Jane S. But tell her
'Tis I, her friend, the partner of her heart,
Wait at the door and beg—

Serv. 'Tis all in vain :—
Go hence and bow to those that will regard you
[*Shuts the Door.*

Jane S. It was not always thus : the time has
been,
When this unfriendly door, that bars my passage,
Flew wide, and almost leap'd from off its hinges,
To give me entrance here : when this good house
Has pour'd forth all its dwellers to receive me ;
When my approaches made a little holiday,
And every face was dress'd in smiles to meet me :

But now 'tis otherwise ; and those who bless'd
me, [wander,

Now curse me to my face. Why should I
Stray further on, for I can die ev'n here ?

(She sits down in the centre of the Stage.)

Enter ALICIA, in disorder, R.H.D.

Alic. What wretch art thou, whose misery and
baseness

Hangs on my door ; whose hateful whine of woe
Breaks in upon my sorrows, and distracts
My jarring senses with thy beggar's cry ?

Jane S. A very beggar, and a wretch, indeed ;
One driv'n by strong calamity to seek
For succours here : one perishing for want,
Whose hunger has not tasted food these three
days ;

And humbly asks, for charity's dear sake
A draught of water and a little bread.

Alic. And dost thou come to me, to me for
bread ?

I know thee not.—Go ;—hunt for it abroad,
Where wanton hands upon the earth have scat-
ter'd it,

Or cast it on the waters.—Mark the eagle,
And hungry vulture, where they wind the prey ;
Watch where the ravens of the valley feed,
And seek thy food with them :—I know thee not.

(Crosses to L.H.)

Jane S. (Rises.) And yet there was a time,
when my Alicia

Has thought unhappy Shore her dearest blessing.

And mourn'd the live-long day she pass'd with-
out me ;

Inclining fondly to me she has sworn,
She lov'd me more than all the world besides.

Alic. Ha ! say'st thou !—Let me look upon
thee well ;— [thee !

'Tis true ;—I know thee now ;—a mischief on
Thou art that fatal fair, that cursed she,
That set my brain a madd'ning. Thou hast
robb'd me ; [ings !

Thou hast undone me.—Murder ! O, my Hast-
See his pale bloody head shoots glaring by me !
Avaunt ; and come not near me.—

Jane S. To thy hand
I trusted all ; gave my whole store to thee.
Nor do I ask it back ; allow me but
The smallest pittance, give me but to eat,
Lest I fall down and perish here before thee.

Alic. Nay ! tell not me ! Where is thy king,
thy Edward,
And all the cringing train of courtiers,
That bent the knee before thee ?

Jane S. Oh ! for mercy ! [rable.

Alic. Mercy ! I know it not !—for I am mise-
I'll give thee misery, for here she dwells,
This is her house, where the sun never dawns,
The bird of night sits screaming o'er the roof,
Grim spectres sweep along the horrid gloom,
And nought is heard but wailings and lamentings.
Hark ! something cracks above ! it shakes ! it
totters !

And see the nodding ruin falls to crush me !
'Tis fall'n. 'tis here ! I felt it on my brain !

Let her take my counsel: [heart,
 Why shouldst thou be a wretch? Stab, tear thy
 And rid thyself of this detested being;
 I wo' not linger long behind thee here.
 A waving flood of bluish fire swells o'er me;
 And now 'tis out, and I am drown'd in blood.
 Ha! what art thou! thou horrid headless trunk?
 It is my Hastings! see he wafts me on!
 Away! I go! I fly! I follow thee.

(*Rushes off*, R.H.)

Jane S. Alas! she raves; her brain I fear is
 turn'd,
 In mercy look upon her, gracious heav'n,
 Nor visit her for any wrong to me!
 Sure I am near upon my journey's end:
 My head runs round, my eyes begin to fail,
 And dancing shadows swim before my sight,
 I can no more; (*Lies down.*) receive me, thou
 cold earth,
 Thou common parent, take me to thy bosom,
 And let me rest with thee.

Enter BELMOUR, R.H.U.E.

Bel. Upon the ground!
 Thy miseries can never lay thee lower.
 Look up, thou poor afflicted one! thou mourner,
 Whom none has comforted! Where are thy
 friends,
 The dear companions of thy joyful days,
 Whose hearts thy warm prosperity made glad,
 Whose arms were taught to grow like ivy round
 thee,

And bind thee to their bosoms?—Thus with thee,
Thus let us live, and let us die, they said.

Now where are they? [stand aloof,

Jane S. Ah, Belmour! where indeed! they
And view my desolation from afar!

And yet thy goodness turns aside to pity me.

Alas! there may be danger; get thee gone.

Let me not pull a ruin on thy head,

Leave me to die alone, for I am fall'n

Never to rise, and all relief is vain. [come

Bel. Yet raise thy drooping head; for I am
To chase away despair. Behold! where yonder
That honest man, that faithful, brave Dumont,
Is hasting to thy aid—

Jane S. Dumont! Ha! where!

(*Raising herself, and looking about.*)

'Then heav'n has heard my pray'r; his very name
Renews the springs of life, and cheers my soul.
Has he then 'scap'd the snare?

Bel. He has; but see—

He comes unlike the Dumont you knew,
For now he wears your better angel's form,
And comes to visit you with peace and pardon.

Enter SHORE, L.H.

Jane S. Speak, tell me! Which is he! and
ho! what would

This dreadful vision! See it comes upon me—

It is my husband—Ah! (*She swoons.*)

Shore. She faints, support her! [surprise.

Bel. Her weakness could not bear the strong
But see, she stirs! and the returning blood

Faintly begins to blush again, and kindle
Upon her ashy cheek :—

Shore. So,—gently raise her —

(*Raising her up.*)

Jane S. Ha ! what art thou ? Belmour.

Bel. How fare you, lady ?

Jane S. My heart is thrill'd with horror,—

Bel. Be of courage ;—

Your husband lives ! 'tis he, my worthiest friend ;—

Jane S. Still art thou there ! still dost thou
hover round me !

Oh, save me, Belmour, from his angry shade !

Bel. 'Tis he himself ! he lives ! look up :—

Jane S. I dare not !

Oh ! that my eyes could shut him out for ever—

Shore. Am I so hateful then, so deadly to thee,
To blast thy eyes with horror ? Since I'm grown
A burden to the world, myself, and thee,
Would I had ne'er survived to see thee more.

Jane S. Oh ! thou most injur'd—dost thou live,
indeed ?

Fall then, ye mountains, on my guilty head :
Hide me, ye rocks, within your secret caverns ;
Cast thy black veil upon my shame, O night !
And shield me with thy sable wing for ever.

Shore. Why dost thou turn away ?—Why
tremble thus ?

Why thus indulge thy fears, and in despair,
Abandon thy distracted soul to horror ?
Cast every black and guilty thought behind thee,
And let 'em never vex thy quiet more.
My arms, my heart, are open to receive thee,
To bring thee back to thy forsaken home,

With tender joy, with fond forgiving love.—
Let us haste.—

Now while occasion seems to smile upon us,
Forsake this place of shame, and find a shelter.

Jane S. What shall I say to you? But I
obey;—

Shore. Lean on my arm;

Jane S. Alas! I'm wondrous faint: [days.
But that's not strange, I have not eat these three

Shore. Oh, merciless!

Jane S. Oh! I am sick at heart!

Shore. Thou murd'rous sorrow!

Wo't thou still drink her blood, pursue her still?
Must she then die? O my poor penitent!
Speak peace to thy sad heart: she hears me not:
Grief masters ev'ry sense—

Enter CATESBY, L.H.U.E. with a Guard.

Cates. Seize on 'em both, as traitors to the
state!—

Bel. What means this violence?

(*Guards lay hold on Shore and Belmour.*)

Cates. Have we not found you,
In scorn of the protector's strict command,
Assisting this base woman, and abetting
Her infamy?

Shore. Infamy on thy head!
Thou tool of power, thou pander to authority!
I tell thee knave, thou know'st of none so virtu-
ous,

And she that bore thee was an Ethiop to her.

Cates. You'll answer this at full: away with
'em.

Shore. Is charity grown treason to your court?
What honest man would live beneath such rulers?
I am content that we should die together,---

Cates. Convey the men to prison; but for
her,---

Leave her to hunt her fortune as she may.

Jane S. I will not part with him :--for me !

Oh ! must he die for me ? [for me !

(*Following him as he is carried off.—She falls.*)

Shore. Inhuman villains !

(*Breaks from the Guards.*)

Stand off ! the agonies of death are on her !--

She pulls, she gripes me hard with her cold
hand. [my ruin ?

Jane S. Was this blow wanting to complete

Oh ! let me go, ye ministers of terror.

He shall offend no more, for I will die,

And yield obedience to your cruel master.

Tarry a little but a little longer,

And take my last breath with you.

Shore. Oh, my love !

Why dost thou fix thy dying eyes upon me,

With such an earnest, such a piteous look,

As if thy heart were full of some sad meaning

Thou couldst not speak ?--

Jane S. Forgive me !--but forgive me !

Shore. Be witness for me ye celestial host,

Such mercy and such pardon as my soul

Accords to thee, and begs of heav'n to show
thee ;

May such befall me at my latest hour,

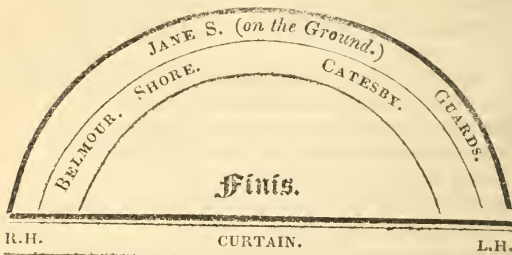
And make my portion blest or curst for ever.

Jane S. Then all is well, and I shall sleep in
peace ;--

'Tis very dark, and I have lost you now :—
Was there not something I would have bequeath'd
you ?

But I have nothing left me to bestow,
Nothing but one sad sigh. Oh ! mercy, heav'n !
(Dies.)

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



Epilogue.

YE modest matrons all, ye virtuous wives,
Who lead with horrid husbands decent lives ;
You, who, for all you are in such a taking,
To see your spouses drinking, gaming, raking,
Yet make a conscience still of cuckold-making ;
What can we say your pardon to obtain ?
This matter here was prov'd against poor Jane :
She never once deny'd it ; but, in short,
Whimper'd,—and cry'd,—“ Sweet sir, I'm sorry for't.”
'Twas well he met a kind, good natur'd soul ;
We are not all so easy to control :
I fancy one might find in this good town,
Some would ha' told the gentleman his own ;
Have answered smart,—“ To what do you pretend,
Blockhead ?—As if I must not see a friend :
Tell me of hackney-coaches,—Jaunts to th' city,—
Where should I buy my china !—Faith, I'll fit ye.”—
Our wife was of a milder, meeker spirit ;
You !—lords and masters ! was not that some merit ?
Don't you allow it to be a virtuous bearing,
When we submit thus to your domineering ?
Well, peace be with her, she did wrong most surely ;
But so do many more who look demurely.
Nor should our mourning madam weep alone,
There are more ways of wickedness than one.

If the reforming stage should fall to shaming
Ill nature, pride, hypocrisy, and gaming ;
The poets frequently might move compassion,
And with she-tragedies o'er-run the nation.
Then judge the fair offender with good nature,
And let your fellow feeling curb your satire.
What, if our neighbours have some little failing,
Must we needs fall to damning and to railing ?
For her excuse too, be it understood,
That if the woman was not quite so good,
Her lover was a king, she flesh and blood.
And since sh' has dearly paid the sinful score,
Be kind at last, and pity poor Jane Shore.

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